THE MESSENGER OF MERCY:

THE COVENANTS OF COEXISTENCE

FROM

THE PROPHET OF PLURALISM

John Andrew Morrow

With a Foreword

by

Craig Considine

And an Afterword

by

Charles Upton

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FOREWORD

I am delighted and honored to write the foreword for John Andrew Morrow's latest book, *The Messenger of Mercy*. This book follows Morrow's groundbreaking book, *The Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of the World* (2013), and his other crucial piece of scholarship, *Islam and the People of the Book: Critical Studies on the Covenants of the Prophe*t (2018). I have had the pleasure of journeying alongside Morrow's work on Prophet Muhammad's relations with Christians. Together, we have worked to spread the message of pluralism and humanity around the world. We recognize the need of Muhammad's teachings in a world fractured by bigotry, extremism, and warfare from multiple angles. *The Messenger of Mercy* provides the remedies for the world's many ills, especially in terms of conflicts between Christians and Muslims as well as between the so-called Western world and Muslim world.

Over a long and fruitful career, Morrow has explored Muhammad's life through arduous studying and scholarship, but he has also applied his knowledge to the public sphere. He has initiated the Covenants Initiative and the Covenants of the Prophet Foundation, two entities aiming to educate the public on the true teachings of Muhammad and counter extremism among both Christians and Muslims. At the Parliament of the World's Religions in Toronto, Canada in December 2018, I listened with interest and admiration as he challenged people of all walks of life to follow in the peaceful footsteps of Prophet Muhammad. Through his passion and scholarly skills, Morrow has inspired religious leaders, community activists, politicians, and academics to not only read but follow the commandments offered by Muhammad in his lifetime.

In *The Messenger of Mercy*, Morrow invites both the guided and misguided on a journey of knowledge and justice. In focusing on the themes of mercy and pluralism, Morrow provides a bridge between two imagined entities – "Western civilization" and "Islamic civilization" that are perceived by many to be at odds with one another. We learn about the similarities between Muhammad and the Founding Fathers of the United States. We see contemporary examples of Muslims defending the honor, integrity, and human

rights of Christians around the world, from Jerusalem to West Africa. It is humbling to read the stories of courage and unity offered in this book. Morrow has produced a powerful mechanism for those who are searching for ways to foster understanding and peace in a world in dire need of both. In short, *The Messenger of Mercy* offers a foundation to carry out God's work on Earth.

Inspired by Muhammad's love of humankind, regardless of religious or racial background, Morrow has taught me and countless others that the Prophet's values as a messenger of God and revolutionary statesmen are aligned with many of the ideals that Western countries strive to uphold. Reading this book, you will find it hard to defend the idea that Christians and Muslims are enemies and that Western values and Islamic values are fundamentally incompatible. Morrow provides compelling evidence that our values are interconnected and mutually inclusive. It is my genuine hope that *The Messenger of Mercy* will provide the means to build bridges of understanding and love across the perceived religious, cultural, and national divides around the world. This book is a critically important and effective learning tool for humanity at large.

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INTRODUCTION

The name "Muhammad" means "the Praiseworthy." And there is much in his words and deeds that is worthy of praise. The revelations that he received and which form part of the Qur'an and the *hadith qudsi* or sacred sayings are sublime sources of spiritual inspiration. His nobility of character is equally noteworthy. After all, God Himself described the Prophet Muhammad as a person of "sublime character" (68:4) who had been sent as "a mercy to the worlds" (21:107).

Although Muhammad was praised by God and praised by people from the seventh century into the twenty-first century, this man, who was "worthy of praise," and "the walking Koran," has also been much maligned. And while it is true that some non-Muslims invented lies and scurrilous stories about him, creating anti-Muhammadan myths, much of the venom that has been directed against the Prophet, Islam, and Muslims comes from Islamic sources themselves. In other words, the biographies of the Prophet Muhammad, the commentaries of the Qur'an, and the compilations of sayings attributed to the Messenger of God, present two conflicting pictures of the person in question.

On the one hand, we have a marvelous and inspiring human being, a prophet, a messenger, a friend of God, a saint among saints, whose wisdom and virtues can and do fill volumes. This is the historical Muhammad, the Messenger of God, to believing Muslims. On the other hand, there is another person, a completely different character, who said and did despicable things. This is Mudhammam, the Anti-Muhammad, the False Messenger of God, a mythological man "worthy of condemnation," who was created by unbelieving Muslims: hypocrites and infidels of the higher order. The two, however, have become co-mingled in some Muslim sources: truth and falsehood have become one. Unable or unwilling to distinguish between the two, Islamophobes relish in the fact that Islamic sources themselves represent their greatest weapons against Islam. We gave our enemies guns and they used them against us.

“Why would any Muslim invent such a thing?” ask Islamophobes when citing scandalous sayings attributed to the Prophet Muhammad. “The traditions in question,” they point out, “are quoted by Muslims, by the Companions of the Prophet, and are considered authentic by Islamic scholars.” Little do these people understand or wish to understand that the greatest enemies of the Prophet Muhammad falsely converted to Islam, some from the very beginning in Mecca, and others at the very end of his mission, pretended outwardly to be believers, while inwardly harboring hatred for God, His Messenger, the Koran, and Islam. If you can’t beat them, they figured, might as well join them. And so, they did. The wolves dressed themselves as sheep and pretended to be meek. As soon as the Shepherd passed away, and returned to his Lord, God Almighty, in Heaven, the predators took over the flock. Viewing the matter in terms of Christian history, it is as if Judas had murdered St. Peter and set himself up as the first Pope.

With turbans on their heads and titles before their names, they redesigned Islam so that it would serve the interests of the carnivores and place the herbivores on their plates. They prohibited the compilation of the Prophet’s teaching and destroyed the documents that his faithful Companions had prepared. They concocted all kinds of false verses of the Qur’an to create confusion, leaving us with thousands of variants that fill volumes to this day. Yet, despite their efforts, the integral Koranic text survived. Since they could not destroy the Book of God directly, they decided to undermine it indirectly, by perverting its interpretation. And so, they did.

And when they saw that despite their prohibition of compiling the sayings of the Prophet the teachings of the Messenger of God were still circulating, they hired scores of court clerics to falsify traditions, to spread falsehood and darkness in the hope that it would extinguish the light of God. “Guide us on the straight path,” Muslims pray, following the Opening Chapter of the Koran. Islam may be the straight path, but the hypocrites at the head of the official and orthodox religion have been making Muslims march backwards to the Days of Ignorance.

This is a guidebook for the well-guided and an invitation to the misguided. It sets milestones that mark the straight and narrow path. We invite you to join us on this journey.

(Courtesy of Simonopetra Monastery)

CHAPTER 1

PROCLAIMING THE IDEALS OF ISLAM

1.1 PEACE

"Islam" is an Arabic word which means "submission" and "surrender." It shares the same root as the word "salaam" which means "peace." The word "Muslim" means "one who submits or surrenders to God." A true Muslim strives to be at peace with God, with humanity, and with creation. Islam is very much an invitation to peace as the following verses from the Koran, the holy book of Islam, showcase:

> O You who believe! Enter absolutely into peace. (2:208)
>
> When you enter houses, give greetings of peace upon each other. (24:61)
>
> And when those come to you who believe in Our verses, say, 'Peace be upon you.' (6:54)
>
> And those who believed and did righteous deeds will be admitted to gardens beneath which rivers flow, abiding eternally therein by permission of their Lord; and their greeting therein will be, 'Peace!' (14:23)
>
> Peace be upon you for what you patiently endured. And excellent is the final home. (13:24)
>
> The Prophet Muhammad said: 'You will not enter Paradise until you believe, and you will not believe until you love one another. Shall I tell you about something which, if you do it, will make you love one another? Greet each other with words of peace.' (Muslim)

1.2 DIVINE UNITY

The foundation of Islam is the belief in one God, the Creator, who is known in Arabic as Allah. This is the same name that Arabic-speaking Jews and Christians use to refer to God. It is related to the Aramaic name for God which is Alah and the Hebrew name for God which is El. The following chapter of the Koran encapsulates the Islamic conception of God:

> Say, 'He is God, One God
> God, the Eternal
> He begets not nor is begotten
> And there is none equal to Him.' (112)

1.3 DIVINE GUIDANCE

God sent prophets to guide people to the belief in divine unity This was the primary mission of Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad. As Almighty God says in the Holy Koran:

> We sent aforetime our messengers with Clear Signs and send down with them the Book and the Balance of Right and Wrong, that people may stand forth in justice, fairness, equity and peace. (57:25)
>
> And We sent Noah and Abraham and established in their line Prophethood and Revelation: and some of them (the people) were on right guidance, but many of them became rebellious transgressors. (57:26)
>
> Those who follow the Messenger, the unlettered Prophet, Whom they find mentioned in their own (Scriptures). In the Law and the Gospel. For he commands them what is just and Forbids them what is evil; he allows them as lawful what is good (And pure) and prohibits them from what is bad (and impure); He releases them from their heavy burdens and from the yokes That are upon them. So it is those who believe in him, honor him, help him, and follow the Light which is sent down with him: it is they who will prosper. (7:157)

Muslims believe in all the prophets and messengers that were sent by God, including those that are not mentioned in the Holy Koran. They also believe in the revelations that they received, including the Torah, the Psalms, the Gospel, and the Koran.

1.4 THE GOLDEN RULE IN ISLAM

The golden rule exists in all faith traditions. It is a basic moral principle of kindness that provides common ground between religions. It is shared by Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, along with other religions. It is also embraced by non-religious people. The Golden Rule is at the heart Islam and the Covenants or Peace Treaties of the Prophet Muhammad. The following passages from the Koran and the Hadith, the sayings of the Prophet, illustrate its central importance:

> Almighty God says: 'Return evil with kindness.' (13:22, 23:96, 41:34, 28:54, 42:40)
>
> Almighty God says: 'And do good to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, the poor, the neighbor who is near of kin, the neighbor who is a stranger, the companion by your side.' (4:36)
>
> The Prophet Muhammad said: 'None of you have faith until you love for your neighbor what you love for yourself.' (Muslim)
>
> The Prophet Muhammad said: 'Whoever wishes to be delivered from the fire and to enter Paradise … should treat the people as he wishes to be treated.' (Muslim)
>
> The Prophet Muhammad said: 'None of you truly believes until he wishes for his brother what he wishes for himself.' (Nawawi)
>
> The Prophet Muhammad said: 'None of you is a believer if he eats his full while his neighbor hasn't anything.' (Ahmad)
>
> The Prophet Muhammad said: 'Do unto all men as you would wish to have done unto you; and reject for others what you would reject for yourselves.' (Abu Dawud)

The Prophet Muhammad said: ‘Hurt no one so that no one may hurt you.’ (Ibn Ishaq)

1.5 LOVE IN ISLAM

Christians say that "God is Love." Muslims say that "God is Loving." The love of God permeates all of creation. It is its very cause. In Islam, God is gender neutral. God, however, has Masculine and Feminine Attributes or Names. To put is simply, God is like a Stern Father and a Loving Mother. In the Koran, God repeatedly reminds us of His Love. As we read in the Holy Koran:

> Verily, My Lord is Merciful and Loving. (11:90).
>
> And He is the Forgiving and the Loving. (85:14)
>
> God loves those who are just. (60: 8)
>
> He has put love and mercy between your hearts. (30:21)
>
> God loves the doers of good. (2:195: 3:134; 5:13; 5:195)
>
> God loves those who are constantly repentant. (2:222)
>
> God loves those who purify themselves. (9:108)
>
> God loves those who fear Him. (3:76; 9:4; 9:7)
>
> God loves the steadfast. (3:146)
>
> God loves those who rely upon Him. (3:159)
>
> God loves those who act justly. (5:42; 49:9; 60:8)
>
> God loves those [who fight for justice] in His cause. (61:4)

The revelations that the Prophet Muhammad received from God are not only found in the Koran. They are also found in the Hadith or Sayings of the Prophet. In these Holy or Sacred Sayings, Almighty God says the following about love:

I was a Hidden Treasure and I loved to be known. Therefore, I created the creatures so that I might be known. (Ibn ‘Arabi, Ibn al-Khatib, Mulla Sadra).

O son of Adam! Serve Me! Verily, I love those who serve Me. (Shirazi)

O son of Adam! If I did not love forgiveness, I would not test anyone by means of sin. (Shirazi)

O Son of Adam! Behave with the people with good manners until I love you. (Shirazi)

O son of Adam! The more your heart longs for this world, the more My love leaves your heart. Verily, I will not let My love and the love of this world join in one heart. Devote yourself to My worship. Purify your deeds from showing off until I dress you in the clothing of My love. (Shirazi)

O son of Adam! You desire and I desire but nothing happens except what I desire. He who tries to reach Me knows Me. He who knows Me wants Me. He who wants Me seeks Me. He who seeks Me finds Me. He who finds Me serves Me. He who serves Me remembers Me. He who remembers Me, I remember him with My mercy. (Shirazi)

O My servants, I have forbidden oppression for Myself and have made it forbidden amongst you, so do not oppress one another. O My servants, all of you are astray except for those I have guided, so seek guidance of Me, and I shall guide you. O My servants, all of you are hungry except for those I have fed, so seek food of Me and I shall feed you. O My servants, all of you are naked except for those I have clothed, so seek clothing of me and I shall clothe you. O My servants, you sin by night and by day, and I forgive all sins, so seek forgiveness of Me and I shall forgive you. (Muslim, Tirmidhi, Ibn Majah)

My servant draws not near to Me with anything more loved by Me than the religious duties I have enjoined upon him, and My servant continues to draw near to Me with supererogatory works so that I shall love him. When I love him, I am his hearing with which he hears, his seeing with which he sees, his hand with which he strikes, and his foot with which he walks. Were he to ask [something] of Me, I would surely give it to him, and were he to ask Me for refuge, I would certainly grant it to him. I do not hesitate about anything as much as I hesitate about [seizing] the soul of My faithful servant: he hates death and I hate hurting him. (Bukhari)

A servant [of God] committed a sin and said: O God, forgive me my sin. And He said: My servant has committed a sin and has known that he has a Lord who forgives sins and punishes for them. Then he sinned again and said: O Lord, forgive me my sin. And He, glorified and exalted be He, said: My servant has committed a sin and has known that he has a Lord who forgives sins and punishes for them. Then he sinned again and said: O Lord, forgive me my sin. And He, glorified and exalted be He, said: My servant has committed a sin and has known that he has a Lord who forgives sins and punishes for sins. Do what you wish, for I have forgiven you. (Muslim and Bukhari)

O son of Adam! So long as you call upon me and ask of Me, I shall forgive you for what you have done, and I shall not mind. O, son of Adam, were your sins to reach the clouds of the sky and were you then to ask forgiveness of Me, I would forgive you. O son of Adam! Were you to come with Me with sins as nearly as great as the earth and were you to face Me, ascribing no partner to Me, I would bring you forgiveness as great as it is. (Tirmidhi and Ahmad)

1.6 JUSTICE IN ISLAM

Although God is Loving, God is also Just. He loves people who believe in God. He loves people who are good. However, God loves not evil doers who reject His existence or who worship others than Him. As we ready in the Holy Koran:

O you who believe! Stand firmly for justice. (4:135)

God loves not the unbelievers. (2: 276; 3:32; 30:45)

God loves not transgressors. (2:190)

God loves not those given to excess. (5:90)

God loves not those who trespass beyond bounds. (7:55)

God loves not corruption. (2:205; 5:67; 28:77)

God loves not the wrongdoers. (3:57; 3:140; 42:40)

God loves not the wasters. (6:141; 7:31)

God loves not any arrogant boaster. (31:18; 57:23; 4:36)

God loves not the arrogant. (16:23)

God loves not those who exult in riches. (28:76)

God loves not the treacherous. (8:58)

God loves not one given to perfidy and crime. (4:107)

God loves not that evil be noised abroad in public. (4:148)

1.7 OPPOSING OPPRESSION

Opposing oppression is a fundamental part of Islam. It is forbidden for Muslims to oppress or to remain oppressed. Muslims are required to promote the good and forbid the wrong. Here is that the Koran and the Prophet say about opposing injustice:

> Almighty God said: 'O you who believe! Upon you is [responsibility] for yourselves.' (5:105)
>
> Almighty God said: 'Do not incline to those who do injustice.' (11:113)
>
> Almighty God said: 'Do not cooperate in sin and aggression.' (5:2)
>
> Almighty God said in a sacred saying: 'O My servants, I have forbidden injustice for Myself and I have forbidden it among you, so do not oppress one another.' (Muslim)
>
> The Messenger of God said: 'Protect yourselves from doing injustice,' he said, 'for injustice will be darkness on the Day of Resurrection.' (Muslim)
>
> The Messenger of God said: 'A Muslim is a brother of another Muslim. He should not oppress him, nor should he forsake him (i.e. when he is being oppressed).' (Bukhari and Muslim)
>
> The Messenger of God said: 'Support the oppressed.' (al-Bara' ibn 'Azib)
>
> The Messenger of God said: 'One who shows respect to a rich man and in the greed of his wealth considers him good, Almighty God becomes angry on him and puts him in a cage of fire at the lowest part of Hell.' ('Amili)

The Messenger of God said: ‘If one praises a tyrant king or shows humility due to greed (of his rewards) then he will be in Hell with him.’ (‘Amili)

The Messenger of God said: ‘Whenever a transgressor is praised, the heavens shudder and the Divine Anger envelopes the one who has praised.’ (Qummi)

The Messenger of God said: ‘Help your brother, whether he is an oppressor or is oppressed.” Since this seem contradictory, he was asked how this was possible. The Prophet responded: “By seizing his hand.’ (Bukhari and Muslim)

The Messenger of God said: ‘When people see an oppressor but do not prevent him from (doing evil), it is likely that God will punish them all.’ (Abu Dawud and Tirmidhi).

The Messenger of God said: ‘Do not be a helper to the oppressors.’ (‘Amili)

The Messenger of God said: ‘One who prays for the long life of an oppressor is as if he likes the opposition of God on the Earth.’ (Ansari)

The Messenger of God said: ‘If one knowingly goes to help an oppressor, he has rejected Islam.’ (Ansari)

The Messenger of God said, ‘If a person even hangs up a cane for the tyrant king so that he can beat the oppressed one, God will change the cane into a snake, seventy thousand yards long, and place it in the Hell fire (to torment him).’ (‘Amili).

The Messenger of God said: ‘Those who take the affairs of oppressors in their hands and help him in oppression will, at the time of death, be conveyed the Divine curse and news of Hell fire by the angel of death. And Hell is an evil resort. One who guides the oppressor will be considered at par with

Haman (the minister of Pharaoh). And the punishment of those who help the unjust and the oppressors themselves will be more grievous than other punishments of the inmates of Hell.' ('Amili)

1.7 IN PRAISE OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD

Peace, divine unity, human unity, and the golden rule, all derive from the Koran and the sunnah, namely, the sayings and teachings of the Messenger of God. The Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him and his family, was described by God as a human being of "sublime character" (68:4). His very name, Muhammad, means "Praiseworthy." Consequently, it should come as no surprise that even non-Muslims recognized his personal qualities. Here is what some major leaders and scholars said about the Prophet Muhammad.

In the words of Edward Gibbon (1737-1794), the British historian:

> The greatest success of Muhammad's life was affected by sheer moral force without the stroke of a sword.

As Napoleon Bonaparte (1769-1821), the French statesman and military leader, testified:

> I respect… God, his Prophet Muhammad, and the Glorious Koran… Muhammad was a great man.

Reverend Bosworth Smith (1794-1884), a scholar from Trinity College, Oxford, described the Prophet in the following terms:

> He was Caesar and Pope in one; but he was Pope without the Pope's pretensions, and Caesar without the legions of Caesar. Without a standing army, without a bodyguard, without a palace, without a fixed revenue, if ever any man had the right to say that he ruled by a right Divine, it was Muhammad; for he had all the power without its instruments and without its supports.

Alphonse de Lamartine (1790-1869), the French poet and statesman, considered the Prophet Muhammad to be a great human being:

> Philosopher, orator, apostle, legislator, warrior, conqueror of ideas, restorer of rational dogmas, of a cult without images; the founder of twenty terrestrial empires and of one spiritual

> empire, that is Muhammad. As regards all standards by which human greatness may be measured, we may well ask, is there any man greater than he?

Thomas Carlyle (1795-1881), the Scottish essayist and historian, was awed at the accomplishments of the Prophet:

> [I am amazed at] how one man [Muhammad] single-handedly could weld warring tribes and wandering Bedouins into a most powerful and civilized nation in less than two decades. The lies which well-meaning zeal has heaped around this man are disgraceful to ourselves alone.

John William Draper (1811-1882), the American scientist, philosopher, and historian, viewed the Prophet Muhammad as the most influential figure in human history:

> Four years after the death of Justinian, A.D. 569, was born at Mecca, in Arabia the man who, of all men exercised the greatest influence upon the human race: Muhammad.

In the words of John Medows Rodwell (1808-1900), the British translator of the Koran:

> Muhammad's career is a wonderful instance of the force and life that resides in him who possesses an intense faith in God and in the unseen world. He will always be regarded as one of those who have had that influence over the faith, morals and whole earthly life of their fellow men, which none but a really great man ever did, or can exercise; and whose efforts to propagate a great verity will prosper.

Major Arthur Glyn Leonard (1855- c. 1910), the British author, praised the Prophet Muhammad in the following words:

> It was the genius of Muhammad, the spirit that he breathed into the Arabs through the soul of Islam that exalted them. That raised them out of the lethargy and low level of tribal stagnation up to the high watermark of national unity and

> empire. It was in the sublimity of Muhammad's deism, the simplicity, the sobriety and purity it inculcated the fidelity of its founder to his own tenets, that acted on their moral and intellectual fiber with all the magnetism of true inspiration.

David George Hogarth (1862-1927), the British archeologist, spoke of the Prophet's impact as follows:

> Serious or trivial, his daily behavior has instituted a canon which millions observe this day with conscious memory. No one regarded by any section of the human race as Perfect Man has ever been imitated so minutely. The conduct of the founder of Christianity has not governed the ordinary life of his followers. Moreover, no founder of a religion has left on so solitary an eminence as the Muslim apostle.

According to Stanley Lane-Poole (1854-1931), the British Orientalist and archeologist:

> He was the most faithful protector of those he protected, the sweetest and most agreeable in conversation. Those who saw him were suddenly filled with reverence; those who came near him loved him; they who described him would say, 'I have never seen his like either before or after.' He was of great taciturnity, but when he spoke it was with emphasis and deliberation, and no one could forget what he said.

Dr. Annie Besant (1847-1933), the activist, writer, and orator, held the Prophet Muhammad in high regard:

> It is impossible for anyone who studies the life and character of the great Prophet of Arabia, who knows how he taught and how he lived, to feel anything but reverence for that mighty Prophet, one of the great messengers of the Supreme. And although in what I put to you I shall say many things which may be familiar to many, yet I myself feel whenever

> I re-read them, a new way of admiration, a new sense of reverence for that mighty Arabian teacher.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1869-1948), the Indian thinker, statesman, and nationalist leader, was an admirer of the Prophet Muhammad. He spoke of him as such:

> I became more than ever convinced that it was not the sword that won a place for Islam in those days in the scheme of life. It was the rigid simplicity, the utter self-effacement of the prophet, the scrupulous regard for his pledges, his intense devotion to his friends and followers, his intrepidity, his fearlessness, his absolute trust in God and in his own mission. These, and not the sword carried everything before them and surmounted every trouble.

Sarojini Naidu (1879-1949), the Indian poet, wrote of the Prophet Muhammad:

> It was the first religion that preached and practiced democracy; for, in the mosque, when the call for prayer is sounded and worshippers are gathered together, the democracy of Islam is embodied five times a day when the peasant and king kneel side by side and proclaim: 'God Alone is Great.'

Sir George Bernard Shaw (1856-1950), the Irish writer, wrote:

> I believe that if a man like him were to assume the dictatorship of the modern world, he would succeed in solving its problems in a way that would bring it much needed peace and happiness. I have studied him, the man and in my opinion, [he] is far from being an antichrist. He must be called the Savior of Humanity.

Philip K. Hitti (1886-1978), the authority on Arab and Middle Eastern History, Islam, and Semitic Languages, acknowledged the accomplishments of the Prophet Muhammad:

> Within a brief span of mortal life, Muhammad called forth of unpromising material, a nation, never welded before; in a country that was hitherto but a geographical expression he established a religion … and laid the basis of an empire that was soon to embrace within its far-flung boundaries the fairest provinces the then civilized world.

William Montgomery Watt (1909-2006), Professor Emeritus of Arabic and Islamic Studies at the University of Edinburgh, described the Prophet Muhammad in glowing terms:

> His readiness to undergo persecutions for his beliefs, the high moral character of the men who believed in him and looked up to him as leader, and the greatness of his ultimate achievement - all argue his fundamental integrity. To suppose Muhammad an impostor raises more problems than it solves. Moreover, none of the great figures of history is so poorly appreciated in the West as Muhammad.

Charles Le Gai Eaton (1921-2010), a British diplomat, writer and scholar who converted to Islam, recognized the love of the Prophet as the binding-force of the Muslim *ummah*:

> Muslims love Muhammad and model themselves upon him…this love is central in the spiritual life of Islam, lending to an otherwise austere religion something that is at once passionate and gentle. He is loved for his courage and for his tenderness, not only as a warrior and a master of men, but also as a perfect father, a perfect husband and a perfect friend – and the humblest, most wretched man or woman, thinking of him, will dream of having such a friend. Those who were closest to him were known, not as "disciples" but as "companions;" almost fourteen centuries after his death, it is in this companionship that the Muslim finds comfort in loneliness and courage in adversity, and this world would be a cold and inhospitable place without him… "No one," wrote Constance Padwick, a Christian caught in the net of

this love, "can estimate the power of Islam as a religion who does not take into account the love at heart of it for this figure. It is here that human emotion, repressed at some points by the austerity of the doctrine of God as developed in theology, has its full outlet – a warm human emotion which the peasant can share with the mystic. The love of this figure is perhaps the strongest binding force in a religion which has so marked a binding power."

K.S. Ramakrishna Rao (b. 1932), the Indian philosopher, wrote:

> The personality of Muhammad, it is most difficult to get into the whole truth of it. Only a glimpse of it I can catch. What a dramatic succession of picturesque scenes! There is Muhammad, the Prophet. There is Muhammad, the Warrior; Muhammad, the Businessman; Muhammad, the Statesman; Muhammad, the Orator; Muhammad, the Reformer; Muhammad, the Refuge of Orphans; Muhammad, the Protector of Slaves; Muhammad, the Emancipator of Women; Muhammad, the Judge; Muhammad, the Saint. All in all, these magnificent roles, in all these departments of human activities, he is alike a hero.

Michael Hart (1932-), Professor of Astronomy, Physics, and the History of Science, ranked the Prophet Muhammad as the world's most influential person:

> My choice of Muhammad to lead the list of the world's most influential persons may surprise some readers and may be questioned by others, but he was the only man in history who was supremely successful on both the religious and secular levels...it is this unparalleled combination of secular and religious influence which I feel entitles Muhammad to be considered the most influential single figure in human history.

John L. Esposito (1940-), Professor of Religion & International Affairs and Islamic Studies at Georgetown University, viewed the Prophet Muhammad as a man of many dimensions:

> Muhammad was indeed a multifaceted Prophet. The extent to which he is misunderstood is not only due to the failure to do a good job narrating his story but also because he is often simply compared to Jesus and not to Biblical prophets who were also political leaders and warriors. That said, Muhammad's humanity and compassion are not explored or emphasized enough.

Karen Armstrong (1944-), the British author and commentator, presented the Prophet Muhammad as a man of peace:

> Far from being the father of jihad, Muhammad was a peacemaker, who risked his life and nearly lost the loyalty of his closest companions because he was determined to effect a reconciliation with Mecca.

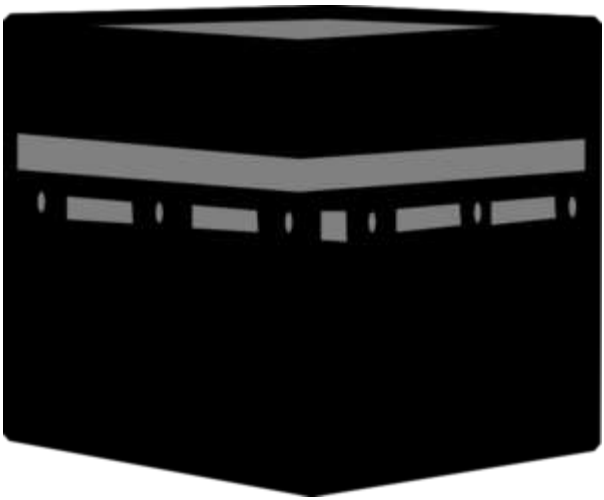
Admired by both friends and foes, the Prophet Muhammad was one of the most important figures in human history. Let us learn some more about his life and achievements.

CHAPTER 2

ESTABLISHING THE IDEALS OF ISLAM

2.1 THE BIRTH OF MUHAMMAD

Muhammad was born in the city of Mecca, in Arabia, in the year 570 CA. His father, Abdullah, died before his birth. His mother, Aminah, died shortly after. Twice orphaned, Muhammad was raised by his grandfather, ‘Abd al-Muttalib, and, later, by his uncle, Abu Talib. As a result of his orphan origins and his upbringing, Muhammad would always identify with the weak and the oppressed.



2.2 PRE-ISLAMIC ARABIA

Apart from the Hanifs, monotheistic Arabs who followed the religion of Ishmael, the son of Abraham, and pockets of Jews, Messianic Jews, Christians, and Zoroastrians, the Arabian Peninsula was predominantly polytheistic. Early historical sources speak of human sacrifices to pagan gods and the burying alive of baby girls. Oppression and injustice were the order of the day. The chief deities of the pagan Arabs were a trio of goddesses: Al-Lat, ‘Uzza and Manat.

Al-Lat, ‘Uzza and Manat, the Three Goddesses

2.3 MUHAMMAD, THE TRUSTWORTHY

Due to his morals and virtues, Muhammad grew to be respected young man. When the Ka'bah, the first house of worship to the One God, which was erected by Abraham, needed to be rebuilt, and the question of who should return the Black Stone (a meteorite long venerated by the pre-Muslim Arabs) to its place arose, the people turned to Muhammad al-Amin, the Trustworthy, to resolve the dilemma. He placed the stone on a sheet and had the leaders of each tribe hold on to it, lift it, and return it to its place.

2.4 THE LEAGUE OF THE VIRTUOUS

As a young man, Muhammad was incensed at the state of Arabian society. The rich exploited the poor. Men exploited women. Racism ruled supreme. Vice had overcome virtue. Although he had yet to receive revelation, Muhammad soon revealed his commitment to social justice. To bring some semblance of law and order, Muhammad, along with various chiefs and tribal leaders, pledged to "respect the principles of justice, and collectively intervene in conflicts to establish justice." The pact was placed in the Ka'bah, in Mecca, to symbolize that it was under the protection of God. Even though the agreement took place prior to Islam, the Prophet Muhammad always considered it binding.

2.5 THE ADVENT OF THE KORAN

At the age of forty, after spending days and nights in prayer and fasting in a cave on the top of the Mountain of Light, on the outskirts of Mecca, the Angel Gabriel appeared to Muhammad and commanded him to:

> Recite in the name of your Lord who created,
> Created man from a clinging substance.
> Recite, and your Lord is the most Generous,
> Who taught by the pen,
> Taught man that which he knew not. (Koran 96: 1-5)

The revelations continued for twenty-three years until the end of the Prophet Muhammad's life. They were committed to memory and writing while the Messenger of God was still alive. They were compiled as a book by several Companions of the Prophet, the foremost of which was Imam 'Ali, his cousin and son-in-law. This book, known as the Koran or Recitation, has been faithfully preserved from the seventh century until the present. Despite minor variants in spelling found in some manuscripts, the text of the Koran has remained remarkably stable for over fourteen-hundred-years.

2.6 THE SEAL OF THE PROPHETS

According to Islam, Muhammad was the final prophet and messenger of God. Although friends of God, revivers, and leaders can surface after him, some of whom can be divinely inspired, none of them can attain the rank of prophet or messenger since it was sealed -- namely, it came to a close -- with the death of the Prophet Muhammad. As Almighty God says in the Holy Koran:

> Muhammad is not the father of any of your men, but (he is) the Messenger of God, and the Seal of the Prophets: And God has full knowledge of all things. (33:40)

2.6 MUHAMMAD: PROPHET, MESSENGER, AND LIBERATOR

After sharing the revelation that he received with his wife Khadijah and her cousin Waraqah, who was a Christian, Muhammad recognized that he was a prophet, a messenger, and a liberator. It was in such terms that God described Muhammad in the Koran:

> He commands them what is just and forbids them what is evil; he allows them as lawful what is good (And pure) and prohibits them from what is bad (and impure); He releases them from their heavy burdens and from the yokes that are upon them. So, it is those who believe in him, honor him, help him, and follow the Light which is sent down with him—it is they who will prosper. (7:157)

2.7 THE PROPHET'S PREACHING IN MECCA: OVER ONE DECADE OF SPIRITUAL, MORAL, AND ETHICAL INSTRUCTION

The Prophet Muhammad shared his message of divine unity and human unity to the people of Mecca and surrounding areas. He spent thirteen years cultivating faith in God along with spiritual and ethical growth.

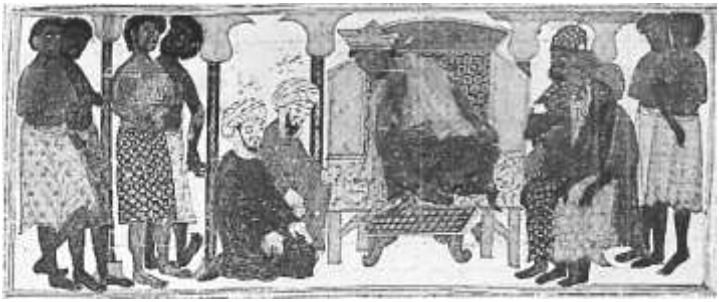
The Prophet Muhammad attracted few followers during his days in Mecca. Those who accepted the message tended to be women, the poor, and people of color, although a few wealthy and influential members of the community were also convinced of his cause.

2.8 THE PERSECUTION

Even though they were persecuted, assaulted, tortured, and martyred by the polytheists, the believers in many gods, the monotheistic Muslims, the believers in one God, were prohibited by the Prophet Muhammad from retaliating with violence. Through patience and constancy, the Messenger of God taught his followers to turn the other cheek for over one decade.

2.9 THE FIRST MIGRATION OF ABYSSINIA

Since the early Muslims were denied freedom of religion in Mecca, the Prophet sent many his followers to Abyssinia or Ethiopia: “the land of the Christian king where no man is wronged.” It was there, among African Christians, that the followers of Muhammad found safety and refuge.



2.10 THE TEACHINGS OF ISLAM

In Islam, the fundamentals of faith include belief in one God, belief in the prophets, belief in the angels, and belief in the Day of Judgement and the Hereafter. Some Muslims include belief in God’s justice and belief in Imams or Leaders after the Prophet Muhammad.

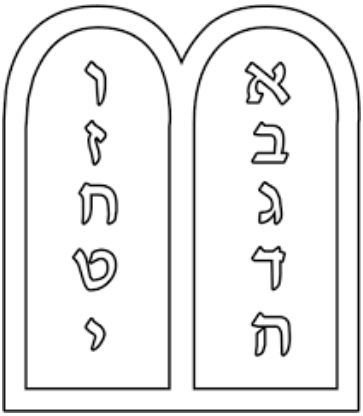
The five branches or “pillars” of religion include prayer, fasting, pilgrimage, charity, sacred struggle, both spiritual and physical, as well as promoting the good and forbidding the wrong. Some include the need to separate from enemies and evil doers who are at war against righteous believers.

1.3 ISLAM AND MUSLIMS

The Prophet Muhammad taught that the religion with God was Islam, namely, submission or surrender to the Creator. Those who followed Muhammad were known as believers and Muslims or "those who submit to God." He did not come to bring a new religion, rather, he came to complete the monotheistic message of Adam, Abraham, Moses, and Jesus. As we read in the Koran:

> For every nation is a messenger. (10:47)
>
> There was no nation but that there had passed within it a warner. (35:24)
>
> We certainly sent into every nation a messenger, [saying], 'Worship God and avoid oppression.' (16:36)
>
> We have believed in God and in what was revealed to us and what was revealed to Abraham, Ishmael, Isaac, Jacob, and the Descendants, and in what was given to Moses and Jesus and to the prophets from their Lord. We make no distinction between any of them, and we are Muslims [submitting] to Him. (3:84)

1.4 THE TEN COMMANDMENTS IN THE BIBLE



The Prophet Moses received Ten Commandments from God at the top of Mount Sinai in Egypt. They are at the heart of Judeo-Christian values. They include:

1. Thou shall not take any God except one God.
2. Thou shall make no image of God.
3. Thou shall not use God's name in vain.
4. Thou shall honor thy mother and father.
5. Thou shall not steal.
6. Thou shall not lie or give false testimony.
7. Thou shall not kill.
8. Thou shall not commit adultery.
9. Thou shall not covet thy neighbor's wife or possessions.
10. Thou shall keep the Sabbath holy.

(Exodus 12: 1-17 & Deuteronomy 5: 6-21)

1.5 THE TEN COMMANDMENTS IN THE KORAN

Since Muslims believe in Moses and the Torah that he received from God, they also believe in the Ten Commandments. In fact, all these moral principles are equally expressed in the Holy Koran.

1. There is no God except one God. (47:19)

2. There is nothing whatsoever like unto Him. (42:11)

3. Make not God's name an excuse to your oaths. (2:224)

4. Be kind to your parents if one or both attain old age in thy life, say not a word of contempt nor repel them but address them in terms of honor. (17:23)

5. Stealing is prohibited. Thieves should be punished. However, if they repent and reform, God is Forgiving and Kind. (5:38-39)

6. They invoke a curse of God if they lie. (24:7) Hide not the testimony. (2:283)

7. If anyone has killed one person it is as if he had killed the whole humanity. (5:32)

8. Do not come near adultery. It is an indecent deed and a way for other evils. (17:32)

9. Do good to your parents, relatives and neighbors. (4:36)

10. When the call for the Friday Prayer is made, hasten to the remembrance of God and leave off your business. (62:9)

1.6 ISLAM AND HUMAN UNITY

Human Unity is the application of Divine Unity in the social context. It explains that God sent prophets to guide people to the belief in the oneness of God and the oneness of Humanity. This was the universal teaching of Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, and Muhammad: spirituality and social justice. As Almighty God says:

> O humankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into Nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise each other). Verily the most honored of you in the sight of God is (he who is) the most Righteous of you. And God has full knowledge and is well-acquainted (with all things). (49:13)

Almighty God says:

> Among His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the diversity of your languages and your colors. Verily, in that are signs for people of knowledge. (30:22)

Almighty God says:

> Humankind was but one community, but [then] differed. (10:19)

The Prophet Muhammad said:

Verily, God Almighty created Adam from a handful which He took from the earth, so the children of Adam come in accordance with the earth. Some come with red skin, white skin, or black skin, and whatever is in between.

The Prophet Muhammad said:

Verily, you have no virtue over one with white skin or black skin, except by favor of righteousness.

The Prophet Muhammad said:

O people, your Lord is one and your father Adam is one. There is no favor of an Arab over a foreigner, nor a foreigner over an Arab, and neither white skin over black skin, nor black skin over white skin, except by righteousness. Have I not delivered the message?

1.7 THE SECOND MIGRATION TO MEDINA

News of the Prophet Muhammad's spiritual, social, economic, and political teachings had spread throughout Arabia. The inhabitants of Yathrib, a city north of Mecca, reached out to the Messenger of God by means of emissaries. Although their city, which was equally divided between Jews and pagan Arabs, was prosperous, the inhabitants were often at war with one another. Although Muslims were only a minority in Medina, accounting for several hundred of the tens of thousands of inhabitants, the entire population accepted Muhammad as its leader.

CHAPTER 3

CONSTITUTION, COVENANTS AND COEXISTENCE

3.1 THE PEACE SANCTUARY OF MEDINA

As soon as the Prophet Muhammad arrived in Medina, he started to consult with Muslim, pagan, and Jewish community leaders. As a popularly elected leader, he never imposed his will on the people. He inspired the population, who rallied around his charismatic personality,

3.2 THE FIRST CONSTITUTION IN THE HISTORY OF HUMANITY

As Prophet and Head of State, Muhammad arranged the drafting of a constitution for his multiethnic, multiracial, multi-religious, and multilingual commonwealth. Known as the Scroll, Charter or Covenant of Medina, it represents the first written constitution in the history of humanity.

Identity would no longer be based on tribe or blood-relations but on citizenship. The state would protect all its citizens regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, sex, call or wealth. It called for peace, justice, unity, loyalty, brotherhood and sisterhood. Henceforth, they would be “One Community” under the rule of law. The Messenger of God described it as an Ummah or Motherland.

The Arab and Jewish tribes of Medina accepted the Constitution in good faith thereby bringing peace to a city prone to civil war. The Constitution of Medina predates the *Magna Carta*, the charter of rights agreed to by King John of England in 1215, by some six hundred years. It may have been a model for our own constitution here in the United States of America. The peace treaties or covenants of the Prophet enshrined the ideals and values which Islamic societies are challenged to live up to. A summary of its main points is provided in section 3.3.

3.3 THE CONSTITUTION OF MEDINA

In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful.

This is a document from Muhammad, the Prophet…

It is between the believers and Muslims and those who followed them, joined them, and worked with them…

They are one community to the exclusion of others…

Believers shall not leave anyone poor and helpless…

The God-fearing believers will oppose rebels and anyone who wants to spread injustice, sin, enmity or corruption between believers…

All the believers will oppose such a bad person even if he is one of their sons…

The protection of God is one. Anyone can give protection to a stranger…

The believers are friends to one another…

The Jews who follow us will get help and be treated equally.

They will not be treated badly. Their enemies will not be helped.

The peace of the believers applies to all of them…

Everything must be fair and just…

The God-fearing believers are rightly guided…

Believers, who accept this Constitution, believe in God, and believe in the Last Day, cannot help a bad person and give him shelter.

If someone does that, God will be mad at him and curse him on the Day of Judgment. God will not accept his excuses or apologies.

If you disagree about anything, you must ask God and Muhammad to judge between you…

If the Jews are fighting alongside the believers, they need to help with the cost of war…

The Jews … are one community with the believers…

The Jews have their religion and the Muslims have their religion…

Loyalty is a protection against treachery...

The close friends of the Jews are the same as the Jews…

The Jews need to pay their expenses and the Muslims need to pay their expenses…

Jews and Muslims must help each other against anyone who attacks the people who follow this constitution…

They need to seek mutual advice and consultation…

A man is not responsible for the bad actions of his ally…

People who are wronged, and who are not treated fairly, must be helped…

Both Jews and believers need to support the military as long as war lasts…

Medina is a peace sanctuary for the people who follow this constitution…

Outsides who are guests have the same rights as their hosts who are citizens… so long as they do not do anything bad or commit a crime…

If there is any disagreement that might cause trouble, it should be referred to God and to Muhammad the Messenger of God…

God accepts this constitution…

Our enemies and the enemies of our enemies will not be given any protection…

The people who follow this constitution must make peace and keep the peace…

God approves of this constitution…

> This constitution does not protect people who are unjust or who are sinners…
>
> People who go to fight in war, and people who stay home during war, are safe unless they are unjust or have sinned…
>
> God protects good people and Muhammad is the Messenger of God…

3.4 A CONFEDERATION OF BELIEVERS BASED ON CONSENSUS

As both the divinely and popularly elected leader of Medina, the Prophet Muhammad governed based on consultation and consensus. As Almighty God revealed in the Koran:

> Consult with them in the matter. (3:159)
>
> The believers are those 'whose affair is [determined by] consultation among themselves.' (42:38)

Islamic rule, as preached and practised by the Prophet Muhammad, involved public consultation and the yearly renewal of pledges of allegiance. Not only did the Messenger of God produce the first written constitution in history, he also introduced the principles of participatory democracy.

3.5 JIHAD: SACRED STRUGGLE AND SELF-DEFENSE

Although the Muslims were prohibited from violence while they were in Mecca, God allowed them to defend their lives and property after they established the first Ummah or Community in Medina. As Almighty God revealed in the Koran:

> Fight in the way of God those who fight you but do not transgress. God does not love transgressors… And if they cease, then indeed, God is Forgiving, Merciful. (2: 190-192)
>
> Were it not that God checks the people, some by means of others, there would have been demolished monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques in which the name of God is much mentioned. (22:40)

Unlike their polytheistic enemies, who committed war crimes of all kinds, the Muslims were required to follow strict military rules.

Although the Prophet Muhammad lived 22,995 days, he participated in less than a dozen battles, most of which only lasted an afternoon. The total death count of all conflicts, and from all sides, was less than one thousand.

The Messenger of God detested war but permitted it in self-defense and to liberate the oppressed. He would insist, however, that "The ink of a scholar is more precious than the blood of a martyr" (Ibn 'Abd al-Barr, Suyuti, Ibn al-Jawzi, and others).

3.6 THE MILITARY RULES OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD

In order to protect the sanctity of human life and minimize destruction of society and nature, the Messenger of God prepared detailed rules of battle as part of his Just War theory. He commanded his fighters as follows:

1) Do not fight for the sake of your pride, to show that you are a warrior or that you are strong.

2) Fight only against those who come to fight with you.

3) You may only fight people who have stolen your possessions.

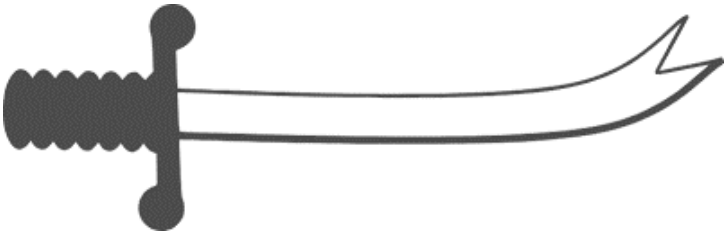
4) You must not steal the possession of other people.

5) You must not touch their women or hurt their children.

6) You must not destroy their houses, farms, or crops, and you must not kill their animals.

7) You must not cut down their trees, destroy the countryside, or ruin their wells.

8) You must not kill those who run away in fear, and you must not strike someone who falls in battle. Only if someone comes at you with a sword in his hand may you defend yourself.



3.7 THE MILITARY RULES OF ABU BAKR, THE FIRST CALIPH

Abu Bakr, the first Caliph (632-634 CE), faithfully followed the code of military conduct that was developed by the Prophet Muhammad. Before engaging in armed conflict, Abu Bakr used to instruct his troops as follows:

> O People!
>
> Listen to these Ten Commandments that I recommend and guard them well.
>
> Do not deceive!
>
> Do not harm!
>
> Do not betray!
>
> Do not seek revenge!
>
> Do not kill children, the elderly or women!
>
> Do not cut down palm trees and do not burn them!
>
> And do not cut down fruit trees!
>
> Do not slaughter lambs, cows or camels unless they are for your consumption…

3.8 THE MILITARY RULES OF ENGAGEMENT OF ‘ALI, THE FOURTH CALIPH

Imam ‘Ali, the first Imam and fourth Caliph, was a brave and mighty warrior who held himself and others to the highest ethical and moral standards. This chivalrous leader used to give the following orders to his soldiers:

1) Never begin a war yourself. God does not like bloodshed. Fight only in self-defense.

2) Never be the first to attack your enemies. Fight back their attacks, but do so boldly, bravely, and courageously.

3) Do not waste your time praising yourself and your actions. Instead of speaking about yourself, speak about God and the Holy Prophet.

4) Never chase and kill those who run away from battle. Life is dear to such people. Let them live so long as death permits them to live.

5) Never kill wounded people who cannot defend themselves.

6) Never strip naked a dead man for his armor and clothing.

7) Never cut off noses and ears of dead men to desecrate them.

8) Never take loot or engage in arson.

9) Never molest or outrage the modesty of a woman.

10) Never hurt a woman, even if she swears at you or hurts you.

11) Never hurt a child.

12) Never hurt an old or disabled person.

3.9 THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD: A MASTER DIPLOMAT

The Prophet Muhammad authored over three hundred letters. They are found in books of biography, traditions, laws, history, and Koranic commentary. Dozens of letters are quoted in Jewish, Samaritan, Christian, and Zoroastrian sources. More than half a dozen originals survive in mosques, monasteries, museums, and private collections.

Although the Messenger of God used many different scribes, the major covenants or peace treaties with the People of the Book were written down by ‘Ali and Mu’awiyyah and witnessed by dozens of prominent Companions of the Prophet, including Abu Bakr, ‘Umar, and Uthman, among many others. The Messenger of God signed some of his correspondence with his palm-print and, later, when his ring was made, he marked them with his famous seal.

3.10 KORANIC PRINCIPLES OF RELIGIOUS PLURALISM

Pluralism is a social organization in which diversity of racial, religious, ethnic, and cultural groups is tolerated. In this sense, we can say that Islam is pluralistic. Some people confuse religious pluralism, which simply means religious diversity, with religious relativism, which means that all religions are the same.

Religious relativism does not mean that all religions are equally true. It simply stresses that there is truth in many religions and that the existence of many religious is a positive thing that enriches the human experience.

The Koran promotes freedom of faith, conscience, belief, religion, association, thought and expression. It prohibits coercion or compulsion in religion and politics. In other words, in Islam, you cannot force someone to believe in something. Islam calls for tolerance and co-existence, namely, living together in peace and getting along. Islam recognizes that there is truth in other religious traditions and treats God as the final arbiter in matters of theological differences. As the Prophet Muhammad said: “Do not believe the People of the Book, nor disbelieve them, but say, ‘We believe in Allah, and whatever is revealed to us, and whatever is revealed to you’” (Bukhari).

Some of the most striking passages in the Koran promoting religious pluralism, including:

There shall be no compulsion in religion. (2:256)

Surely those who believe, and those who are Jews, and the Christians, and the Sabians, whoever believes in God and the Last day and does good, they shall have their reward from their Lord, and there is no fear for them, nor shall they grieve. (2:63)

And we have sent down the Book to you [Muhammad] with truth, confirming and conserving the previous Books… We have appointed a law and a practice for every one of you. Had God willed, He would have made you a single community, but He wanted to test you regarding what has come to you. So compete with each other in doing good. And every one of you will return to God and He will inform you regarding the things about which you differed. (5:48)

If they [the enemy] incline toward peace, you should incline toward peace also and trust in God. (8:61)

O humankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise (each other). Verily the most honored of you in the sight of God is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And God has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things). (49:13)

It may be that God will grant love and friendship between you and those you now hold as enemies for God has power over all things. God is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. God does not forbid you from dealing kindly and justly with those who do not fight you nor drive you out of your homes. For God loves those who are just. (60:7-8)

Say: O followers of the earlier revelations! Come to a common word we and you hold: that we worship none but God, we shall not ascribe divinity to aught besides God and we shall not take human beings for our Lord besides God. (3:64)

Say: O you who reject the truth. I do not worship what you worship and you do not worship what I worship … Unto you your religion and unto me mine (109: 1–6).

(Seventeenth century Turkish language copy of the *Covenant of the Prophet Muhammad with the Monks of Mount Sinai*. Courtesy of St. Catherine's Monastery)

3.11 THE COVENANT OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD WITH THE MONKS OF MOUNT SINAI

The *Covenant of the Prophet Muhammad with the Monks of Mount Sinai* was granted to the Monastery of St. Catherine in Egypt during the second year of the hijrah, namely, the migration of the Messenger of God from Mecca to Medina. It reads:

> In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful.
>
> This covenant was written by Muhammad, the son of ‘Abd Allah…
>
> He has written it for the members of his religion and to all those who profess the Christian religion in East and West, near or far, Arabs or non-Arabs, known or unknown, as a covenant of protection...
>
> If anyone breaks the covenant… he has broken the Covenant of God, breaks his word, makes a joke of his religion, and deserves to be cursed by God….
>
> If a monk or pilgrim seeks protection… in a church… I am behind him, defending him from every enemy…
>
> Nothing will be forced upon them…
>
> A bishop will not be removed from his bishopric. A monk will not be removed from his monastery. A hermit will not be removed from his tower. A pilgrim will not be prevented from completing his pilgrimage…
>
> None of their buildings we will destroyed. They money from their churches will not be stolen to build mosques or houses for Muslims.

Christian monks, bishops, and believers will not pay taxes…

They are under my protection. They are covered by my covenant. They are under my security. I will protect them from all harm.

They will not be forced to go to war…
With the People of the Book there is to be no conflict…

If a Christian woman marries a Muslim, she must be treated kindly, and she must be allowed to pray in her church….

The Muslims will help the Christians take care of their religious buildings…

The Muslims will defend them…

The Muslims will not break this promise until the hour comes and the world ends…

(The Symbolic Palm-Print of the Prophet Muhammad Found on the *Covenant of the Prophet Muhammad with the Monks of Mount Sinai* Found at Mount Athos in Greece. The hand is black as this was the heraldic color of the Prophet's Family. The color green was also a symbol of the Household of the Prophet. Courtesy of Simonopetra Monastery)

3.12 THE COVENANT OF HUDAYBIYYAH

In the second year of the hijrah, the Prophet Muhammad concluded the *Covenant of Hudaybiyyah*, a peace treaty between the Muslims of Medina and the non-Muslims of Mecca. It served as an invitation to the People of the Book to sign covenants with the Prophet Muhammad and the Muslim Community. It reads:

> In your name, O God! This is the treaty of peace between Muhammad ibn ‘Abd Allah and Suhayl ibn ‘Amr. They have agreed to set down their weapons for ten years.
>
> During this time each party shall be safe. No party will hart the other. No damage will be done. They will act with honesty and honor toward one another.
>
> Anyone in Arabia who wants to enter a treaty or covenant with Muhammad has the right to do so. Anyone who wants to enter a treaty of covenant with Quraysh has the right to do so…

3.13 THE COVENANT OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD WITH THE CHRISTIANS OF PERSIA

The *Covenant of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of Persia* was discovered in the Cathedral of New Julfa, in Isfahan, by Leon Arpee, an Armenian American scholar, during the first half of the twentieth century. The manuscript itself indicated that it had been authenticated by Imam Ja'far al-Sadiq himself who had compared it to a copy of the same document which was in the possession of his family. It reads:

> By the will of God! In the Name of God Merciful!
>
> This covenant must be obeyed by all the Christian nations throughout the world…. Muslims must obey this covenant…
>
> Muslim believers must defend and help Christian believers wherever they are, whether they are close or far, throughout the Christian world. They must protect their places of worship and the monks and priests that live there…
>
> The Muslim believers must leave the religious buildings of the Christina believers alone… Christian priests must not be prevented from doing their duties… They must not be persecuted because of their beliefs and practices…. They must be allowed to pray as they wish in their places of worship and according to their religion… Their churches cannot be torn down or destroyed…
>
> Christians shall not be asked to fight for Muslims against the enemies of the Faith…
>
> Christians will not be forced to accept Islam…
>
> Muslims will treat Christians with mercy and kindness and protect them from oppressors…

If a Christian woman marries a Muslim man, she will be allowed to keep her Christian faith, attend Christian churches freely, and practice her religion with liberty…

Since the Christians have submitted to us, and asked for our protection and refuge, it is legitimate to offer them all forms of help….

(The Cathedral of New Julfa in Isfahan, Iran, where the *Covenant of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of Persia* was rediscovered by Leon Arpee)

العهد والشروط التي شرطها محمد
رسول الله لاهل الملة
النصرانية

ختم في مدينة باريس على يد الحقير
انطون وبراي
سنة الف ستمائة وثلاثين لسيدنا
يسوع المسيح

RELATION DV
VOYAGE
DE PERSE.
FAICT PAR LE R. P. PACIFIQVE DE
Prouins Predicateur Capucin.
OV VOVS VERREZ LES REMARQVES PARTICVLIERES
AVSSI LE COMMANDEMENT DV GRAND
ENSEMBLE LE BON TRAITEMENT QVE LE ROY
AVEC
LE TESTAMENT DE MAHOMET QVE LES TVRCS
A PARIS,
Chez NICOLAS & IEAN DE LA COSTE, freres, au
M. DC. XXXI.
AVEC PRIVILEGE DV ROY.

(Seventeenth century printed copies of the *Covenant of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of the World*)

3.14 THE COVENANT OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD WITH THE CHRISTIANS OF THE WORLD (I)

The *Covenant of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of the World* was rediscovered in the Monastery of Mount Carmel, in the Holy Land, by Father Pacifique de Provins (1588-1648) in 1627 or 1628, and published in Paris, in Arabic and Latin, by Father Gabriel Sionita (1577-1648) in 1630, and by Father Pacifique himself, in 1631. Concluded by the Prophet Muhammad in the fourth year of the hijrah, it reads:

This covenant was written by Muhammad, the Messenger of God, for the followers of the Christian religion…

This document… must be respected…

Anyone who respect Islam will respect this covenant… Anyone who breaks it, breaks the Covenant of God…

I protect their churches and places of pilgrimage…

I protect their religion and their property … in the very same way that I protect myself, my successors, and the People of my Community among the Believers and the Muslims.

I place them under my protection from any damage or harm…

I am behind them, protecting them myself, by means of my followers, my helpers, and the members of my religious community…

Since I have power over them, I must govern them. I must protect them from all damage and make sure that no harm happens to them that does not happen to me and my

Companions who, along with me, protect this noble command…

It is not permitted to remove a bishop from his bishopric or a Christian from his Christianity, a monk from his monastery, a pilgrim from his pilgrimage or a hermit from his tower…

It is not permitted to destroy any part of their churches or to take parts of their buildings to build mosques or homes for Muslims….

It is not permitted to impose a tax on monks or bishops…

No Christian will be made Muslim by force: "And dispute ye not with the People of the Book, except with means better" [29:46] …

They must be covered by the wing of mercy. Prevent any harm from reaching them wherever they may find themselves and in any country in which they are…

The Muslims must not abandon the Christians and leave them without help and assistance…

Christian women must not be forced into marriages with Muslim men against their will…

If a Muslim takes a Christian woman as a wife, he must respect her Christian beliefs… He will give her freedom to listen to her religious leaders, to follow her own religion, and will not be forced to leave it…

If the Christians ask the Muslims to help them fix their churches and convents… the Muslims must help and support them…

Whoever breaks or changes this Covenant will be expelled from the Covenant between God and His Messenger…

This Covenant must not be broken or changed until the Hour and the end of the world…

Le Père Pacifique de Provins (1588-1648).

(Father Pacifique de Provins, the pious man who rediscovered the *Covenant of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of the World*)

(Father Gabriel Sionista, the Maronite scholar who published the *Covenant of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of the World* in Arabic and Latin)

3.15 THE COVENANT OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD WITH THE CHRISTIANS OF THE WORLD (II)

This second version of the *Covenant of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of the World* was rediscovered by the author of this work, Dr. John Andrew Morrow, in the National Library of France, and published for the first time, in Arabic and English, in 2013, in *The Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of the World*. This document of Egyptian origin, which was reportedly a copy of an ancient manuscript, which was composed in the fourth year of the hijrah, reads:

> In the Name of God, the Creator, the Living, the Speaking, the Everlasting…
>
> This covenant of God was ordered to be written by Muhammad… the Messenger of God, may God's peace and blessings be upon him and his family, to all the Christians and all the monks…
>
> The person who respects this covenant respects Islam and his religion…
>
> The person who breaks this covenant, which was given by the Messenger of God, changes it, or disobeys it, has rejected it…
>
> I must use my power, my horses, my men, my weapons, my strength, and my Muslim followers, to protect the land and monasteries of the Christians in every region, near or far…
>
> I provide security to the Christian people, their churches, their businesses, their houses of worship, the residences of their monks, and their places of pilgrimage…
>
> I place them under my protection, my security, and my trust at every moment. I defend them from any damage, harm or revenge. I am behind them, protecting them from every enemy or anyone who wishes them harm.

I sacrifice myself for them by means of my helpers, my followers, and the People of my Community because they are my flock and the people under my protection…

I extend my authority, my care, and my protection over them from every harm so that it does not reach them. No harm will reach them unless it reaches my Companions who [are there to] protect them and assist Islam.

It is not permitted to remove a bishop from his bishopric, a monk from his monastery, a Christian from his Christianity, a hermit from his tower or a pilgrim from his pilgrimage.

It is not permitted to destroy any part of their churches or their businesses or to take parts of their buildings to build mosques or homes for Muslims.

It is not permitted to tax monks, bishops, and those who live with them…

The Christians under our protection will not be forced to go war…

No one who practices the Christian religion will be forced to enter into Islam. "And dispute ye not with the People of the Book, except with means better" [29:46]…

They must be covered by the wing of mercy and all harm that could reach them, wherever they may find themselves and wherever they may be, must be repelled.

If a Christian were to commit a crime or an offense, Muslims must provide him with help, defense, and protection, as well as pay his penalty for him. They should encourage reconciliation between him and the victim, to help or save him…

The Muslims must not abandon him or leave him without help and assistance since I have given them a covenant of God which is Muslims must respect…

They have received rights to protection that cannot be broken….

Muslims should not take Christian women in marriage against the will of their parents…

Whoever … forces his [Christian] wife to disobey her religion has broken the Covenant of God and the promise of His Prophet… He will be considered a liar...

If the Christians ask Muslims to help fix their churches and convents, or to help them with other matters dealing with their affairs and religion, the Muslims must help and support them…

Whoever breaks or changes this covenant will be forced out of the Covenant of God and His Messenger.

Everyone must respect the treaties and alliances that I have made with the monks wherever they may be.

The Messenger of God, may the peace and blessings of God be upon him, must respect what he has given on his behalf and on behalf of the Muslims. He must guard and protect them. He must have mercy upon them until end. In other words, until the hour arrives, and the world comes to an end.

Anyone who is unjust to a Christian, breaks this covenant and rejects it, I will be his enemy on the Day of Judgment…

3.16 THE COVENANT OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD WITH THE CHRISTIANS OF NAJRAN

Muhammad, the Messenger of God, concluded several covenants with the Christians of Najran during the second part of his prophetic mission. The most extensive of them was rediscovered by Habib the Monk in the House of Wisdom in Baghdad in 878/879 CE and which was cited in the *Chronicle of Seert*, a Nestorian history which may date as early as the ninth century CE. It reads:

> In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful.
>
> This covenant of protection was given by God and His Messenger to the People of the Book, the Christians, who belong to the religion of Najran or any other Christian sect…
>
> It was written by Muhammad, the Messenger of God to all of humanity, as a guarantee of protection on the part of God and His Messenger…
>
> It is forbidden for any man, whether he is a governor or holder of authority, to cancel it or break it…
>
> The Christians are worthy of this covenant of protection from God, His Messenger, and the Believers…
>
> The Christians … refused to make war against God and His Messenger. God, as well, has declared that their kindness towards the followers of this faith and their kindness towards Muslims was sincere…
>
> In fact, some Christians, who trustworthy and who knew the divine religion, helped us to proclaim this religion and came to the help of God and His Messenger, by preaching to men according to His Will and to help him accomplish his mission…

And since the cause of God seemed clear to them, they did not turn back on their steps nor did they turn their backs.

They drew close, remained firm, consented, assisted, confirmed, made generous promises, gave good advice, and assured me by means of oaths and covenants that they would support the truth which I brought and that they would repel those who refused and contradicted it…

After they returned to the followers of their religion, they did not break their covenant, nor did they change their opinion. On the contrary, they observed what they had promised to me when they left me and I learned, to my great pleasure, that they proved their devotion…

The Christians tried to support my movement and waged war against those who hated my doctrine and who wanted to discredit it, alter it, reject it, change it, and overturn it...

All the Arab chiefs, leading Muslims, and People of the Book, from all around the world, sent me letters expressing the fondness of Christians towards my cause…

The bishops and the monks showed an unshakable loyalty in their attachment to my cause and the devotion of their persons to confirm and support the spread of my mission...

The Christians acted this way in observance of the treaties contracted between them and me, in order that they fail not to fulfill the obligations to which they had committed themselves during their meeting with me and through a spirit of zeal to support my cause and to make my mission known…

The Christians … respected my alliance. They recognized my rights. They fulfilled the promises that they had made during our meeting. They assisted the representatives that I

had sent to the frontiers. They earned my concern and my affection by fulfilling the obligations that I had contracted with them in the name of all the Muslims spread from East to West. They earned my protection during my life and after my passing, when God will cause me to die…

So long as Islam will spread and my true mission and faith will grow, this covenant will be obligatory for all Believers and Muslims…

If, after my passing, any member of my community breaks this covenant of God… the proof of God will testify against him. And God is Sufficient as a Witness.

The people, as well, must not harm them. They must respect the covenant that I have made with them…

This covenant reminds Believers to be king, to encourage good will, to command charity, and to prevent evil. It is the path of sincerity that leads to justice, God willing.

(The city of Najran in Arabia)

3.17 THE COVENANT OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD WITH THE ASSYRIAN CHRISTIANS

The *Covenant of the Prophet Muhammad with the Assyrians Christians* was brought to scholarly attention by Reverend George David Malech in his History of the Syrian Nation (1910) which itself was based on a history authored by Shamasha George David Malech (1837-1909), the father of the author, in Assyrian. In it, the Messenger of God decrees the following:

> God has told me in a vision what to do, and I confirm His Command by giving my solemn promise to keep this agreement.
>
> To the followers of the Islam I say: Carry out my command, protect and help the Christian nation in this country of ours in their own land.
>
> Leave their places of worship in peace; help and assist their chief and their priests when in need of help, be it in the mountains, in the desert, on the sea, or at home.
>
> Leave all their possessions alone, be it houses or other property, do not destroy anything of their belongings, the followers of Islam shall not harm or molest any of this nation, because the Christians are my subjects, pay tribute to me, and will help the Muslims.
>
> No tribute, but what is agreed upon, shall be collected from them, their church buildings shall be left as they are, they shall not be altered, their priests shall be permitted to teach and worship in their own way--the Christians have full liberty of worship in their churches and homes.
>
> None of their churches shall be torn down, or altered into a mosque, except by the consent and free will of the Christians. If anyone disobeys this command, the anger of God and His Prophet shall be upon him…

The Christians are not obliged to turn Muslims, until God's will makes them believers…

The Muslims shall not force Christian women to accept Islam, but if they themselves wish to embrace it, the Muslims shall be kind to them.

If a Christian woman is married to a Muslim and does not want to embrace Islam, she has liberty to worship at her own church according to her own religious belief, and her husband must not treat her unkindly on account of her religion.

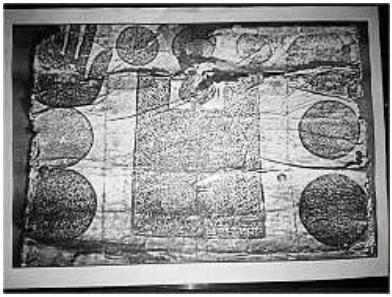
If anyone disobeys this command, he disobeys God and his prophet and will be guilty of a great offense.

If the Christians wish to build a church, their Muslim neighbors shall help them. This shall be done, because the Christians have obeyed us and have come to us and pleaded for peace and mercy.

If there be among the Christians a great and learned man, the Muslims shall honor him and not be envious of his greatness. If anyone is unjust and unkind to the Christians, he will be guilty of disobeying the Prophet of God…

This document shall be entrusted to the Christian chief and head of their church for safe keeping.

3.18 THE COVENANT OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD WITH THE SYRIAC ORTHODOX CHRISTIANS



(The banner at the top of the *Covenant of the Prophet Muhammad with the Syriac Orthodox Christians*)

The *Covenant of the Prophet Muhammad with the Syriac Orthodox Christians* has been housed in St. George al-Humayrah, in Syria's Valley of Christians, since time immemorial. In it, the Messenger of God declares the following:

> I commit myself to grant Covenants and treaties to those who requested them from me and from the entire community of Muslims.
>
> I … grant them the Covenant of God and his treaty, and place them under the protection of the prophets, His Chosen Ones, His friends, from the believers and the Muslims…
>
> I protect them … and I safeguard them. I grant security and safety to their churches, their homes, their places of worship, their monasteries, their sites of pilgrimage…
> I protect their religion and their property… I place them under my protection from any damage, harm, death, and retribution…
>
> Having authority over them, I must govern them, protecting them from all damage…

It is not permitted to remove a bishop from his bishopric or a Christian from his Christianity, a monk from his monastic life or a pilgrim from his pilgrimage or a hermit monk from his tower.

Nor is it permitted to destroy any part of their churches, to take parts of their buildings to construct mosques or the homes of Muslims.

Whoever does such a thing will have violated the Covenant of God, disobeyed His messenger, and betrayed the Divine Alliance.

It is not permitted to impose *jizyah* or any kind of tax on monks or bishops save that which they are prepared to give up willingly…

No Christian will be made Muslim by force: And dispute yet not with the People of the Book, except with means better [29:46].
They must be covered by the wing of mercy. Repel all harm that could reach them wherever they may find themselves and in any country in which they are.

If a Christian were to commit a crime or an offense, Muslims must provide him with help, defense, and protection…

The Muslims must not abandon the Christians and leave them without help and assistance…

In virtue of this Covenant, they have obtained inviolable rights to enjoy our protection, to be protected from an infringement of their rights, so that they will be bound to the Muslims both in good and bad fortune.

Muslims should not take Christian girls in marriage against the will of their parents…

If a Muslim takes a Christian woman as his wife, he must respect her Christian beliefs....

Whoever, despite this order, forces his wife to act contrary to her religion … will enter into open rebellion against the pact of His messenger, and God will count him among the liars.

If the Christians seek the help and assistance of the Muslims to repair their churches and their monasteries or to arrange matters pertaining to their affairs and religion, they, [the Muslims], must help and support them…
Whoever contravenes or transgresses the provisions of this treaty he will be cast out of the protection of God and the protection of His messenger.

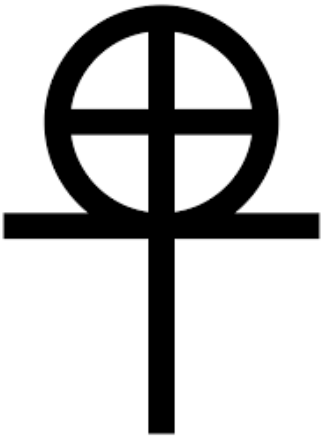
May every believer abide by the Covenants and treaties which were granted to the bishops, monks, and Christians from the People of the Book…

The Messenger of God must respect what he has decreed for himself and the Muslims as a protection for them until the Hour comes, and the world comes to an end….

God is Sufficient as a Witness to this Covenant

(St. George al-Humayra Monastery Syria's Valley of the Christians)

3.19 THE COVENANT OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD WITH THE COPTIC CHRISTIANS



The *Covenant of the Prophet Muhammad with the Coptic Christians* was brought to light by Georg Graf in 1914. The copy of the covenant he rediscovered appeared to date from the 1800s; however, it was said to have been copied from the original. In it, the Messenger of God professes the following:

> This is my Covenant to all the protected Christians, and with all the places where they live, so that they may be protected by us for the sake of God, the Most-High.
>
> They are God's trusted subjects on His earth. They preserve what He revealed to them in the Gospel, in the Psalms, and in the Torah. Before God, the Most-High, they have nothing that angers Him or gives Him cause to accuse them...
>
> The Christians shall be safe in all their affairs from the rising of the sun until its setting and from the north to the south. He gave this commandment to them out of fairness on his part and upon the command of God, the Most-High…

I will protect them wherever they may be… I personally take them under my protection and the protection of my followers, the sons of Ishmael, who must guard and watch over them.

I will always keep all harm and violence away from them and will keep every person away from them who is their enemy and causes them harm.

I will lead them personally and with the help of my followers, my helpers, and with the family of my religion, the Muslims, for they are God's flock and my flock.

I also command the government and its leaders, the jurists and religious scholars, to not treat them harshly. I will keep all violence and all evil away from them. Such violence will not happen to them from the family of my religion and my community.

I will see that they are honored in all cities and villages. They will be scribes and trusted advisers of those in power and kings, appointed governors, and all the judges of the earth.

The monks and priests shall not owe any taxes. Their monasteries, churches, and property will always be free of taxation.

None of their patriarchs and none of their bishops will be removed from their positions and places. They shall be honored.

Their laws and customs shall not be abolished, and you will not cause them and their churches any problems.

A Christian may not be prevented from practicing his religion. It is not permitted to destroy their houses of worship. This is not what God commands. Every creature of God hopes for leniency from the Lord.

It is not permitted to remove anything from the homes of the Christians to take to your homes. It is not permitted to enter the homes of Christians without permission…

Nothing will be removed from their places of worship or from their churches. If any of their places of worship are destroyed, they will be rebuilt as they originally were.

No crime, accusation or sin shall be directed towards them…

I command you not to harass the Christians…

Muslims should not intervene between two Christians… in order to favor one over the other. They can only intervene to promote reconciliation between them, to encourage mutual good-will and friendship, to prevent conflict, and to prevent the use of weapons…

No Muslims shall deceive a Christian out of hatred in order to commit an injustice. Do not adorn yourselves with their possessions by force! Do not respond to them other than in the kindest manner! Take them under your wing and keep all harm and every act of violence away from them, wherever they are and wherever they stay. If one of you wrongs a Christian, then the Christian will receive support from my people against the danger threatening him.

Do not be hostile towards them. Do not abandon them. Do not lead them to destruction. Truly, we have given them what they deserve. You must remove from them every act of violence that strikes them. Be their helpers in the affairs of the world…

Whenever the Christians need one of you, then you shall grant them your support and provide him with assistance in any matter that concerns their welfare. The Muslims must help them.

None of you can hate, oppress or despise them. Whoever does so, hates God and hates me and is excluded from our mercy until he respects the commands of this covenant that we have made with the religion of the protected Christians. None of you may hate or assault them.

Do not set foot in the houses of worship, churches, and monasteries. Do not make their worship and prayers impossible for these are commanded, in truth, in the revealed books…

The monks and priests are to be sincerely honored by you. Treat them in a friendly manner, wherever they may be. Do not turn them over to their enemies. Do not use violence to force them to abandon their religion. They must be protected for the sake of God, the Most-High, the Mighty, and the Wise, out of goodness and kindness.

The monks and priests have a covenant of protection that I have given them. No evil or injustice will touch them, wherever they are, and wherever they reside, in cities or villages, so long as we and all Muslims have power over them. We must guarantee their protection. We must be lenient, kind, merciful, helpful, and protective… until the end of this world and the coming of the Hereafter on the Day of Resurrection.

None of my people will prevent the Christians from beating their clappers. They were already beaten on the ship of our lord, Noah, may peace be upon him.

3.20 THE COVENANT OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD WITH THE ARMENIAN CHRISTIANS OF JERUSALEM

The *Covenant of the Prophet Muhammad with the Armenian Christians of Jerusalem* was granted by the Messenger of God to Abraham I, the Patriarch of Jerusalem in the year 626 CE. In it, the Prophet of Islam provides the Armenians with the property rights to many major Christian sites in the City of Peace in the Holy Land. This remarkable document reads:

> From Muhammad, the son of ‘Abd Allah, the Prophet and Messenger of God, to Abraham, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, and to the Armenian Bishops of Damascus, and those who are found in other Muslim territory, and to those who depend upon them, namely, the Ethiopians, the Copts, and the Syrians, who live in Jerusalem: I have given their convents, churches, schools, residences, and fields.
>
> I, the Messenger of God, with God as my Witness, and with the conscious witness of all people, men and women, who are found here, have promised and given the churches located in Jerusalem, including the Church of the Holy Resurrection and the Cathedral of St. James in the southern part of the Holy City, which is located next to the Monastery of Zion.
>
> I have also given them the Mount of Olives Monastery, the Chapel of the Prison of Christ, the Church of Bethlehem, and the chapels of St. John of Samaria, the oratories located behind the sanctuary of the Holy Resurrection and the totality of the upper and inner levels of Golgotha and the Tomb of Christ where the eternal light shines, all the places of religious pilgrimage, as well as the mountains, the valleys, the residences, and their acquisitions; I have granted them with the witness of God, the Messenger of God, and all believing Muslims.

3.21 THE TREATY OF NAJRAN

The following *Treaty of Najran* is recorded in Muslim sources. It might be a summary of the longer version found in the *Chronicle of Seert* or another treaty altogether. It reads:

> In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful.
>
> This is a covenant of protection between Muhammad, the Messenger of God, and the People of Najran.
>
> To the Christians of Najran and its neighboring territories: God's protection and the promise of His Prophet applies to their lives, their religion, and their property.
>
> It applies to those who are present as well as those who are absent.
>
> Nothing will stop them from practicing their faith and religious practices. There will be no change to their rights and privileges.
>
> No bishop will be removed from his bishopric. No monk will be removed from his monastery. No priest will be removed from his parish.
>
> They will continue to enjoy everything they previously enjoyed great or small.
>
> No image or cross will be destroyed.
>
> They will not oppress or be oppressed.

They will not practice blood-vengeance as they did in the Days of Ignorance.

They will not be taxed. They will not be forced to supply the Muslim troops.

If anyone demands his right from you, justice will be maintained between you.

You will not be oppressed. You will not be allowed to oppress others.

Whoever charges usury or high interest rates will be excluded from my protection.

No of you will be responsible for the crimes of another person.

Whatever is mentioned in this treaty is from God. Muhammad is responsible for enforcing it until God sends a new command.

This treaty is binding as long as they are loyal, respect their obligations, and avoid what is wrong.

3.22 THE COVENANT OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD WITH THE JEWS OF MAQNA

The *Covenant of the Prophet Muhammad with the Jews of Maqna* was granted to the Jewish community that lived in northwestern Arabia towards the end of his prophetic mission. It is cited by early Muslim authorities like Ibn Sa'd and Baladhuri.

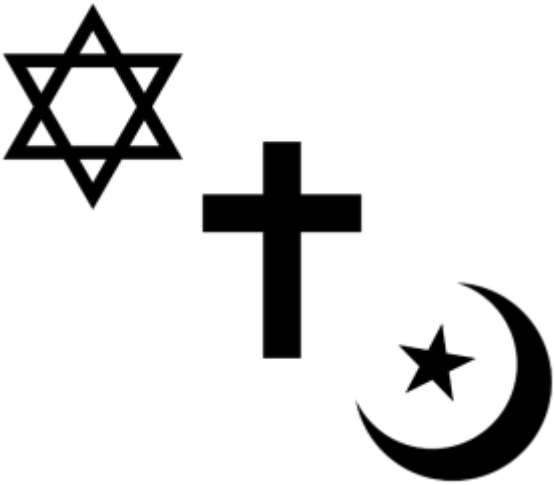
The original on which the Muslim versions were based was rediscovered in the Cairo Geniza, a collection of three-hundred thousand Jewish manuscript fragments found in the storeroom of the Ben Ezra Synagogue in Fustat or Old Cairo, in Egypt. The document reads as follows:

> To the sons of Hanina, who are Jews of Maqna, and the people of Maqna, near Aylah…
>
> Your security is ensured. You are given the protection of God and His Messenger…
>
> God's Messenger forgives you the wickedness you have done and all your sins…
>
> You are given God's protection and that of His Messenger. Nobody will do you injustice or harm. The Messenger of God himself give you protection…
>
> Nobody will rule over you unless it is one of your people or someone from the Family of the Messenger of God.
>
> Peace be upon you.

3.23 THE COVENANT OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD WITH THE CHRISTIANS OF AYLAH

The *Covenant of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of Aylah* was granted to the believers in Christ that lived on the Gulf of ‘Aqabah in northwestern Arabia. In it, the Messenger of God professed the following:

> In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful.
>
> This is a covenant of protection from God and Muhammad, the Prophet and the Messenger of God, for the People of Aylah, their ships, and their caravans, by land and by sea… They have the protection of God and the protection of Muhammad, the Prophet….



3.24 THE COVENANT OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD WITH THE KINGS OF HIMYAR

The *Covenant of the Prophet Muhammad with the King of Himyar* is recorded in Ibn Ishaq's biography on the life of the Messenger of God. In this long letter, which was written in the tenth year of the hijrah, the Prophet Muhammad says the following:

> If a Jew or a Christian becomes a Muslim, he is a believer with his rights and obligations. He who holds fast to his religion, Jew or Christian, is not to be turned from it.

3.25 THE COVENANT OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD WITH THE SAMARITANS

The Samaritans are monotheistic followers of Moses. They have their own version of the Torah, limited to the first five books of the Hebrew Bible, which they hold is the original, unchanged text. There are about six thousand differences between the Samaritan Torah and the Jewish Torah. The Samaritans believe that the Jews turned away from the real form of Judaism. Samaritan leaders predicted the coming of the Prophet Muhammad, visited him, and asked for his protection. In return, he gave them the following pledge:

> I, Muhammad, the son of 'Abd Allah, have commanded that a covenant of protection and security be written for the Samaritan community for their persons, their children, their property, their wealth, their places of worship, and their savings, and that it be binding in all the provinces and places in which they live. We also promise to treat them and the people of Palestine in the best possible way.

3.26 THE COVENANT OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD WITH THE YEMENITE JEWS

The Messenger of God made many covenants with the Jewish people in northern, central, and southern Arabia. Over half a dozen Covenants of the Prophet with the Jews of Yemen have been passed down through rabbinical lines. They are very similar in content and form to the covenants or peace treaties that the Prophet Muhammad concluded with the various Christian groups of the Middle East. The following document was dictated by the Messenger of God to Imam ʻAli in the ninth year of the hijrah and was witnessed by ten Companions of the Prophet. It reads:

> In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. By God's mercy and His blessing.
>
> O people of the tribes of Israel and Muslims and Believers…
>
> The Children of Israel … will be safe under God's security… and under the security of the Muslims and the Believers...
>
> I have taken them as my clients and extended protection to them.
>
> I have removed from them all shame, insult, abuse, accusations of wrong-doing, and any disgrace.
>
> I have extended security to them in every village, in every market, and in all the land of the Muslims and the Believers.
>
> No wrong, harm, and no crime should affect them.
>
> Nobody can make legal claims against them, steal from them, or tax their properties and their farms…
>
> God will not bless anyone who oppresses the Children of Israel even the weight of an atom. If anyone does, I will

testify against him on the Day of Resurrection.

They will not be stopped from entering mosques, the tombs of saints or schools…

No one will lay a hand upon them or oppress them…

They are not to change their religion for another.

They are not to violate their Sabbath or do any work on it.

They are not to stop reading the Torah…

They are not to be stopped from praying in their synagogues or from drinking intoxicating beverages in their homes.

They are not to be stopped from attending schools or ritual baths.

God will punish anyone who harms the Children of Israel with misfortune on himself and upon his household, upon his offspring, his beasts and his fields, from that day forth until the Day of Judgment.

He will condemn him to Hell for having acted against my Covenant, my seal, my protection, my oath, and my witness.

This is the reward of the Children of Israel who fought for me and broke their Sabbath.

The Sons of Jacob fought bravely for me, O Quraysh and O my allies.

The Children of Israel rallied around me and we were victorious over the enemy.

By God, by God, O Muslims and Believers, may you keep and honor this covenant of protection upon which I have placed my seal.

3.27 THE COVENANT OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD WITH THE ZOROASTRIANS

Zoroastrianism is one of the world's oldest religion. It was founded by Prophet Zoroaster in ancient Persia over three-thousand five hundred years ago. He preached a monotheistic religion, a religion that believes in one God, centered in a dualistic cosmology of good and evil, namely a battle between good and bad, in which evil is eventually destroyed.

Zoroastrianism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, share many common beliefs, including angels, demons, saviors, and a cosmic battle at the end of times. Although Muslims could not eat their meat nor marry them, the Prophet Muhammad placed the Zoroastrians under the category of People of the Book or Protected People. In honor of Salman the Persian, a close companion of the Prophet who had been a Zoroastrian priest, and later a Christian, before he embraced Islam, the Messenger of God granted a covenant of protection to his family of hereditary Zoroastrian priests. It reads:

> This is a covenant for the people of the House of Salman.
>
> They have God's protection and my protection. It applies to their lives, property, homes, plains, mountains, pastures, and springs. They will not be treaty unjustly. No hardship will be imposed on them.
>
> It is obligatory for all the believing men and women who hear this covenant to honor, respect, and revere the family of Salman. They must not oppose them, harm them or do anything bad to them.
>
> They will not be forced to cut their forelocks. They will not be forced to pay taxes…
>
> If they ask you for something, give it to them. If they misbehave, forgive them, but if misdeeds are committed against them, defend them...

The House of Salman deserves these protections because God … has given Salman a high status over believers.
God revealed to me: “Paradise longs for Salman more than Salman longs for Paradise.”

He is a man in whom I put my trust and faith. He is pious and pure. He is a sincere advisor to the Messenger of God and the believers. Salman is one of us, a member of the Family of the Prophet.

Let no one oppose this covenant regarding respect for the people of the House of Salman and their descendants. It applies to those who convert to Islam and those who keep their religion.

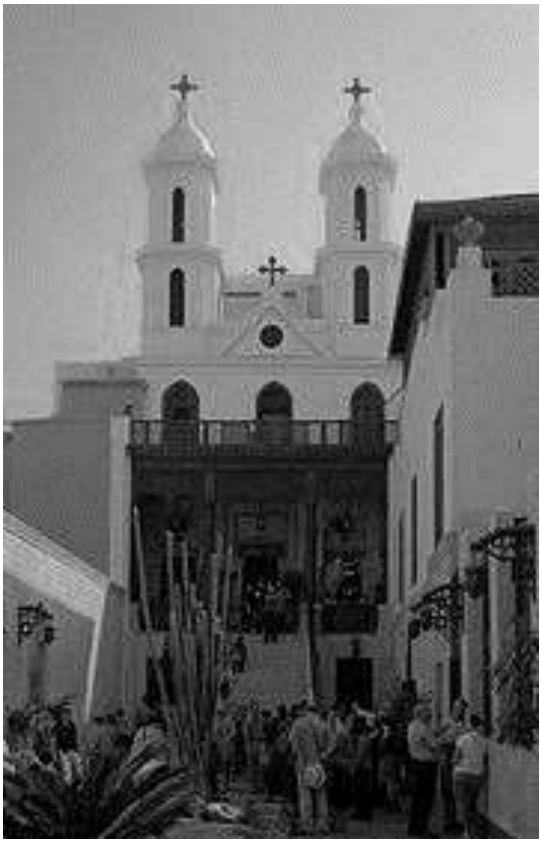
Whoever opposes this covenant has opposed God and his Messenger and will continue to be cursed until the Day of Reckoning.

Whoever honors them has honored me and will be rewarded by God. And whoever harms them has harmed me, and I will be his enemy on the Day of Resurrection: the Fires of Hell will repay him, and I will remove my protection from him.

3.28 THE PEACE TREATIES OF THE PROPHET:

A QUESTION OF CONSENSUS

Are the Covenants of the Prophet genuine or are they forgeries? Although some scholars have disputed their authenticity, the consensus of the scholarly community over the course of history is that they are indeed of prophetic origin.



3.29 MUSLIMS COMMANDED TO PROTECT THE PEOPLE OF THE BOOK

Far from persecuting the People of the Book, namely, Jews, Christians, Samaritans, and Zoroastrians, the Prophet Muhammad commanded his followers to protect them by any moral means necessary. Here is a selection of his sayings on this important subject:

> The Prophet Muhammad said: "Whoever oppresses a Jew or a Christian, I will testify against him on the Day of Judgment." (Bukhari, Abu Dawud, Mawardi, Abu Nu'aym, Baladhuri, Jalabi)

> The Prophet Muhammad said: "Whosoever kills a Jew or a Christian will not smell the fragrance of Paradise, even though its fragrance can be smelt at a distance of forty years." (Bukhari, Bayhaqi, Ibn Zanjawayh)

> The Prophet Muhammad said: "Observe scrupulously the protection accorded by me to non-Muslim subjects. Whoever oppresses the non-Muslim subjects, shall find me to be their advocate on the day of Resurrection (against the oppressing Muslim)." (Suyuti)

> The Prophet Muhammad said: "Whoever does injustice to a Jew or a Christian, decreases his right, burdens him for that which he cannot afford, or takes something from him unwillingly, I will raise a complaint against him on the Day of Judgment." (Abu Yusuf)

> The Prophet Muhammad said: "The blood money for a Jew, a Christian, and every non-Muslim citizen is like that of the Muslim." (Amr ibn Shu'ayb)

The Prophet Muhammad said: “Whoever kills a Jew or a Christian, God will make Paradise forbidden for him.” (Ibn Zanjawayh)

The Prophet Muhammad said: “Whoever mistreats a non-Muslim will be punished on the day of judgment.” (Jalabi)

The Prophet Muhammad said: “Whoever hurts a Jew or a Christian hurts me.” (Tabarani and Jalabi)

The Prophet Muhammad said: “Whoever causes damage to a Muslim or non-Muslim is to be cursed.” (Abu Yusuf)

The original Arabic terms used in these traditions are *dhimmi* and *mu’ahad*, namely, “protected person” or “covenanted person.”

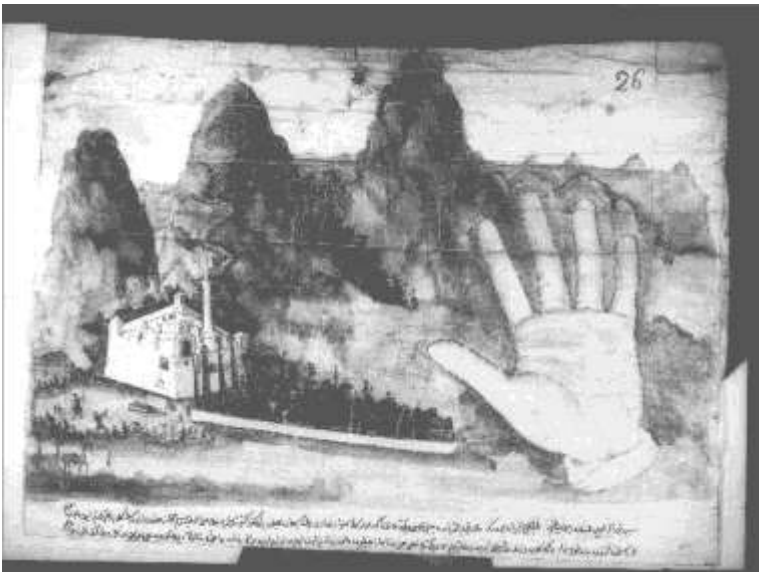
They generally apply to *Ahl al-Kitab* or People of the Book, a category that includes Jews, Samaritans, Christians, and Sabians but which can also include Zoroastrians.

These terms can also apply to the broader category of *Ahl al-Dhimmah* or “protected people” which could include people of any faith. In Moghul India, the Hindus, Jains, and Buddhists, were all treated as *Ahl al-Dhimmah*. When North African Muslims came across the Vikings, they placed them in the same category as the Magians. Islam, at its best, was inclusive and pluralistic.

3.30 OPPORTUNITIES LOST

The Prophet Muhammad's approach was simple. He would invite people to Islam. If they accepted Islam, they became part of the Muslim Community. If they preferred to preserve their religion, the Prophet would offer them a covenant of protection, making them friends and allies of the Muslims.

In the letters he sent to the major rulers of the world, the Prophet Muhammad quoted the Koran, which says: "O People of the Book! Come to a common word between us and you" (3:64). Not only did the Byzantines and the Persians reject Islam, and refuse to enter an alliance with the Muslims, they prepared their armies to attack them. Had Byzantine and Persian rulers made peace with the Prophet, history would have taken a completely different course.



(Depiction of the Monastery of St. Catherine, symbolically protected by the Prophet, that appears on a copy of the *Covenant of the Prophet with the Monks of Mount Sinai*)

3.31 SEEING ISLAM AS OTHERS SAW IT

Certain scholars, who are hostile to Islam and threatened by Muslims, provide a selective and self-serving perspective on history. In other words, they deliberately wish to portray the Prophet Muhammad, Islam, and Muslims in a negative light. When it comes to the spread of Islam, they quote the enemies of Islam who waged war against it.

As can be expected, the vision of a person fighting Islam is not the same as the vision of a person who, while not Muslim, has sided with Islam. The fact of the matter is that many Jews, Samaritans, Christians, and Zoroastrians had a positive view of the Prophet, Islam, and Muslims. In order to bring back balance to the force of history, we present the following positive presentations.

The *Teaching of Jacob*, written between 634-640 CE, reported the rise of Muhammad and the widespread support he had received from Messianic Jews. It reads:

> We Jews were overjoyed. And they were saying that the prophet had appeared, coming with the Saracens, and that he was proclaiming the advent of the anointed one, the Christ who was to come.

In 647 or 648 CE, Ishoyahb III, the Nestorian Patriarch from Iraq, noted that new Muslim rulers:

> Not only do they not fight Christianity, they even commend our religion, show honor to the priests and monasteries and saints of our Lord, and make gifts to the monasteries and churches.

In the *Dialogue against the Jews* and the *Dialogue of Papiscus and Philo*, which date between 640 and 697 CE, the former by Anastasius of Sinai and the latter by an anonymous author, it is written:

> Do not say that we Christians are today afflicted and enslaved. This is the greatest thing, that though persecuted and fought by so many, our faith stands and does not cease,

> nor is our empire abolished, nor are our churches closed. But amid the peoples who dominate and persecute us, we have churches, we erect crosses, found churches and engage in sacrifices.

While they were angry at the Muslim Conquest, and claimed that they were persecuted, they admitted that their churches remained opened and they remained free to observe their religion.

In the *Chronicle* of John, Bishop of Nikiu, which was written in the 640s or 690s, it is reported that:

> [T]the [Melchite] patriarch Cyrus [of Alexandria] set out and went to Babylon to the Muslim, seeking by the offer of tribute to procure peace from them and put a stop to war in the land of Egypt. And 'Amr welcomed his arrival and said unto him: 'Thou hast done well to come to us.' And Cyrus answered and said unto him: 'God has delivered this land into your hands: let there be no enmity from henceforth between you and Byzantium: heretofore there has been no persistent strife with you.'. And they fixed the amount of tribute to be paid. And as for the Ishmaelites, they were not to intervene in any matter…
>
> The Byzantine troops in Alexandria were to carry off their possessions and their treasures and proceed (home) by sea, and no other Byzantine army was to return. But those who wished to journey by land were to pay a monthly tribute. And the Muslim were to take as hostages one hundred and fifty soldiers and fifty civilians and make peace. And the Byzantines were to cease warring against the Muslim, and the Muslim were to desist from seizing Christian Churches, and the latter were not to intermeddle with any concerns of the Christians. And the Jews were to be permitted to remain in the city of Alexandria.

In his *Universal History*, written in 687 CE, John Bar Penkaye, an Eastern Syriac Nestorian, clearly refers to a promise that the Messenger of God made with the Christians and refers to similar commitments made with other faith communities. It reads:

> Indeed, we should not consider their coming to be ordinary. For it was a divine deed. Prior to summoning them, He had previously prepared them to hold Christians in honor. Thus, there also carefully came from God a certain commandment that they should hold our monastic order in honor. And when they came in accord with a divine commandment, they seized – so to say – the two kingdoms without war or difficulty. Thus, with neither armor nor human wiles… God thus gave victory into their hands… For apart from divine aid, how could naked men riding with neither armor nor shield be victorious?
>
> A man among them named Mu'awiyyah, took the reins of government of the two empires: Persian and Roman. Justice flourished under his reign, and a great peace was established in the countries that were under his government and allowed everyone to live as they wished. They had received, as I said, from the man who was their guide an order in favor of the Christians and the monks. While Mua'wiyyah reigned there was such a great peace in the world as was never heard of, according to our fathers and our fathers' fathers. There was no difference between pagan and Christian, the believer was not distinct from the Jew, and did not differ from the deceiver…
>
> Similarly, because of his guidance they held to the worship of one God, according to the customs of the old law. Firstly, they were so attached to the tradition of Muhammad who was their leader, that they inflicted the death penalty on anyone who seemed not to obey his commands. Their troops went every year into distant countries and islands, raided and brought back captives from all the nations that are under

> heaven. From every man they required only the tribute, and left him free to hold any belief, and there were even some Christians among them: some belonged to the heretics and others to us…
>
> The accursed heretics who received such assistance for the present time, instead of evangelizing and baptizing the heathen, as required by the ecclesiastical law, undertook a contrary evangelization, perverting to their sacrilegious (faith) almost all the churches of Byzantium, and revived and rebuilt what had already been abolished…
>
> [The "heretics" were undoubtedly the ancestors of today's Greek Orthodox Christians.]

Sebeos, a seventh century CE Armenian bishop and historian, described the rise of Islam in the following terms:

> Twelve peoples [representing] all the tribes of the Jews assembled at the city of Edessa. When they saw that the Iranian troops had departed leaving the city in peace, they closed the gates and fortified themselves. They refused entry to troops of the Roman lordship. Thus Heraclius, emperor of the Byzantines, gave the order to besiege it. When [the Jews] realized that they could not militarily resist him, they promised to make peace. Opening the city gates, they went before him, and [Heraclius] ordered that they should go and stay in their own place. So, they departed, taking the road through the desert to Tachkastan to the sons of Ishmael.
>
> [The Jews] called [the Arabs] to their aid and familiarized them with the relationship they had through the books of the [Old] Testament. Although [the Arabs] were convinced of their close relationship, they were unable to get a consensus from their multitude, for they were divided from each other by religion.

> In that period a certain one of them, a man of the sons of Ishmael named Muhammad, became prominent. A sermon about the Way of Truth, supposedly at God's command, was revealed to them, and [Muhammad] taught them to recognize the God of Abraham, especially since he was informed and knowledgeable about Mosaic history. Because the command had come from on High, he ordered them all to assemble and to unite in faith.
>
> Abandoning the reverence of vain things, they turned toward the living God, who had appeared to their father -- Abraham. Muhammad legislated that they were not to eat carrion, not to drink wine, not to speak falsehoods, and not to commit adultery.
>
> He said: 'God promised that country to Abraham and to his son after him, for eternity. And what had been promised was fulfilled during that time when [God] loved Israel. Now, however, you are the sons of Abraham, and God shall fulfill the promise made to Abraham and his son on you. Only love the God of Abraham and go and take the country which God gave to your father Abraham. No one can successfully resist you in war, since God is with you.'
>
> … All the remnants of the sons of Israel then assembled and united, becoming a large force

In the *Nistarot*, a seventh century apocalypse which presents a Judaic messianic view of the Muslim conquest, the Angel Metraton informed Simon ben Yohai, a second-century rabbi from ancient Israel, of the rise of Islam, saying:

> When he saw the kingdom of Ishmael that was coming, he began to say: 'Was it not enough, what the wicked kingdom of Edom did to us, but we must have the kingdom of Ishmael too?' At once Metatron the prince of the countenance answered and said:

> ‘Do not fear, son of man, for the Almighty only brings the Kingdom of Ishmael in order to deliver you from this wicked one [Edom / Byzantium]. He raises up over the Ishmaelites a prophet according to his will and will conquer the land for them, and they will come and restore to it greatness and a great dread will come between them and the son of Esau [the Byzantines.]’

Willibald, a pilgrim from England, journeyed to Rome in 720 CE where he spent several years “under monastic rule.” In 723 CE, he set off to the Holy Land. He reports that they were arrested by the Saracens or Muslims. They were brought before the Commander of the Faithful who said: “Why should we punish them? They have committed no crime against us. Give them their permit and let them go!” This demonstrates that the pilgrim routes were protected as per the pledge of the Prophet Muhammad.

An eight-century Maronite chronicle, covering the years 658-664 CE, notes that:

> When the Jacobites were defeated, Mu’awiyyah ordered them to pay 20,000 denarii. So it came a custom for the Jacobite bishops that every year they give that sum of gold to Mu’awiyyah so that he not unleash his hand upon them.

This confirms that the Christians were protected in exchange for paying tribute. They were neither killed nor forcibly converted to Islam. Rather than destroy Christian places of worship, Mu’awiyyah used to perform pilgrimages to them and pray there:

> Many Arabs gathered and made Mu’awiyyah king and he went up and sat down at Golgotha and prayed there. He went to Gethsemane and went down to the tomb of the Blessed Mary and prayed in it.

Since the Byzantines remained bellicose, the Maronite chronicle wrote that Mu’awiyyah “reneged on the peace with the Romans and did not accept peace from them any longer, but said: ‘If the Romans

want peace, let them surrender their weapons and pay the tax.'" Mu'awiyyah's policy was clear: no peace with the warmongers. He did, however, offer to protect their rights in return for surrender and taxation.

In the ninth century CE, the anonymous Nestorian Christian author of the *Chronicle of Seert* described Muslim rule in the following terms:

> The Arabs treated them with generosity and by the grace of God (may He be exalted) prosperity reigned and the hearts of Christians rejoiced at the domination of the Arabs. May God strengthen it and make it triumphant!

The *Life of Gabriel of Qartmin* (d. 648 CE), written in the ninth century, established that the Caliph 'Umar respected the Covenants of the Prophet:

> This lord Gabriel went to the ruler of the sons of Hagar, who was Umar bar Khattab, in the city of Gezirta. He (Umar) received him with great joy, and after a few days the blessed man petitioned this ruler and received his signature to the statutes and laws, orders and prohibitions, judgements and precepts pertaining to the Christians, to churches and monasteries, and to priests and deacons that they do not give the poll tax, and to monks that they be freed from any tax. Also, that the wooden gong should not be banned and that they might chant hymns before the bier when it comes out from the house to be buried, together with many [other] customs. This governor was pleased at the coming to him of the blessed man and this holy one returned to the monastery with great joy.

Speaking of Benjamin I, Patriarch of Alexandria (d. 665 CE), patriarch Dionysius of Tellmahre (818-845 CE) reported the following:

> Concerning the land of Egypt, we have found in histories that Benjamin, the patriarch of the orthodox, gave Egypt to

> the Arabs. The Copts handed over Alexandria and Egypt to the Arabs because they were oppressed by the persecution of the Chalcedonians. Cyrus, the Chalcedonian patriarch, who tied the red slipper of kings to one foot and the sandal of monks to the other, like one who has royal and religious authority, drove out the patriarch Benjamin. He left and went to the Arabs and promised that he would hand over to them Alexandria, if they would expel Cyrus and restore the churches to him. When he had promised and they had confirmed it with oaths, he returned and informed his people and they surrendered Alexandria to the Arabs.

Dionysius viewed the rise of Islam as a form of liberation for Christians. As he explained,

> God, who exacts his due and who determines sovereignty among people on earth, will give power to whom He chooses. He may appoint even the dregs of mankind to be their rulers. When He saw that the measure of the Romans' sins was overflowing and that they were committing every sort of crime against our people and our churches, bringing our confession to the verge of extinction, He stirred up the Sons of Ishmael and enticed them hither from their southern land. This had been the most despised and disregarded of all peoples of the earth, if indeed they were known at all. Yet it was by bargaining with them that we secured our deliverance. This was no small gain, to be secured from the Roman imperial oppression.

According to Dionysius, the people of Egypt celebrated the Muslim conquest as they viewed it as a victory for the Coptic Church.

Abraham III (r. 905-936 CE), the Catholicos of the Nestorians, said:

> We [Nestorians] have only one king, that of the Muslims.

In the words of the tenth century Agapius of Hierapolis, an Arab Christian writer and historian wrote:

> The head of them (i.e. the Arabs) was a man called Muhammad son of ‘Abd Allah and he became their chief and king... Christians from among the Arabs and other (peoples) came to him and he gave them a guarantee of safety and wrote documents for them… All the peoples in opposition to him did likewise, I mean the Jews, Zoroastrians, Sabaeans and others; they gave allegiance to him and took from him a guarantee of safety on the condition that they would pay to him the poll-tax and land tax.

Michael the Syrian, who was the Patriarch of the Syriac Orthodox Church from 1166-1199 saw the coming of the Arabs as an act of “the God of Vengeance” to:

> Deliver us from the hands of the Romans – from their wickedness, from their anger, from their cruel zeal towards us, and to find ourselves at rest.

A tenth or eleventh century Jewish source noted that:

> It was God’s will to have us find favor before the Ishmaelite kingdom at the time of the conquest of the Holy Land from the hands of Edom. When they (the Arabs) came to Jerusalem, there were with them men from among the Children of Israel who showed them the place of the Temple.

In *Bustan al-‘Uqul* or *The Garden of Wisdom*, Nathan’el al-Fayyumi (c. 1090-1165 CE), a Yemenite Jew, wrote:

> A proof that He sends a prophet to every people according to their language is found in this passage of the Koran: ‘We sent a prophet only according to the language of his people.’ … Muhammad was a prophet to them but not to those who preceded them in the knowledge of God.

Samuel of Ani (1105-1185 CE) stated that:

> Muhammad stayed the sword and by word of his instruction they [the Muslims] subjected to themselves the greater part

> of the universe. With an eternal oath, he sealed a deed for the land of Armenian, (that) they could freely observe Christianity.

In *Mishneh Torah*, Maimonides (1135-1138 CE) wrote that:

> All those words of Jesus of Nazareth and of this Ishmaelite [i.e., Muhammad] who arose after him are only to make straight the path for the messianic king and to prepare the whole world to serve the Lord together.

In 1348 CE, Patriarch Nil wrote to Pope Urban VI:

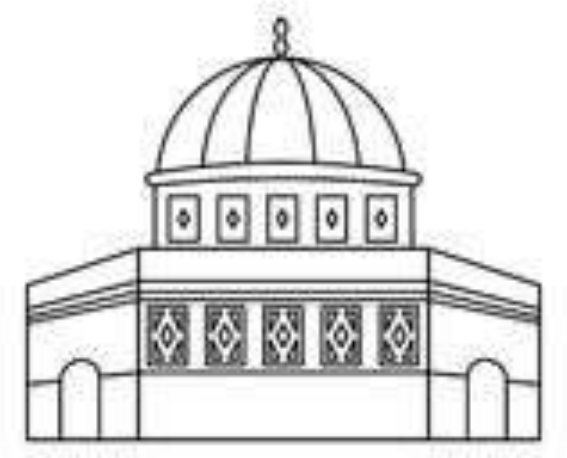
> Although we suffer from the Turkish conquest by the will of God because of our sins, we enjoy full liberty, being able to receive and send letters, having all freedom to select, ordain, and send bishops wherever we wish in order to take care of our ecclesiastical affairs without any obstacle as far as the very heart of infidel regions.

The Samaritan, Abu al-Fath ibn Abi al-Hasan al-Samiri wrote in the fourteenth century CE:

> The Prophet of Islam did not cause anyone distress throughout his life. He would present his belief before the people, accepting anyone who came to him, [yet] not compelling one who did not…
>
> Muhammad was kind towards the Samaritans, for he wanted to have friendly dealings with them. He neither reviled the Samaritans, nor did them harm. They in their turn did not revile him. Likewise, he hated evil and despised men who transgressed his law. If a man is well-disposed, he comes to him; if a man is not well-disposed, he does not keep his friendship…
>
> Muhammad never mistreated any of the followers of the Law… Muhammad was a good and mighty person because he made a treaty of friendship with the Hebrew People….

Writing in the seventeenth century CE, Patriarch Macarius of Antioch prayed that:

> May God perpetuate the Empire of the Turks for centuries and centuries to come! For they collect taxes without concern for religion and without caring to know if their subjects are Christians, Christians, Jews or Samaritans.



3.32 THE CONFIRMATION OF THE PEACE TREATIES OF THE PROPHET BY THE CALIPHS, SULTANS, AND SHAHS

The Covenants or Peace Treaties of the Prophet are not Christian, Jewish, Samaritan or Zoroastrian forgeries. All the evidence indicates that they were given to the People of the Book by the Prophet Muhammad. Throughout history, Muslim leaders gave copies of the Covenants of the Prophet to the People of the Book as official recognition of their status as protected citizens.

The Covenants of the Prophet were renewed, often on a yearly basis, from the seventh century until the twentieth century, a practice that came to an end with the collapse of the Ottoman Empire on July 24, 1923. Although there are thousands of decrees and edicts confirming the Covenants of the Prophet, here is a selection of some of the most important ones:

CALIPH ABU BAKR (632 CE)

> In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful.
>
> This is the written statement of God's slave, Abu Bakr, the successor of Muhammad, the Prophet and Messenger of God.
>
> He affirms your rights as a protected neighbor: yourselves, your lands, your religious community, your wealth, your retainers, and your servants, those of you who are present or abroad, your bishops and monks, monasteries, and all that you own, be it great or small. You shall not be deprived of it and shall have full control over it.

CALIPH ‘UMAR (636 CE)

This is a guarantee that ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab makes with the inhabitants of Jerusalem.

It protects their lives, their belongings, their churches, their crucifixes, and everything that relates to their beliefs. Their churches will not be inhabited by Muslims nor will they be destroyed. Their household goods will not be taken from them. And they will not be forced to leave their religion.

CALIPH ‘UMAR (636 CE)

In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful…

The present Covenant of ‘Umar ibn al-Khattab is a contract and a treaty delivered to the distinguished and most reverent Sophronios, the Patriarch of the Imperial Nation, on the Mount of Olives, in Jerusalem. It includes the laity, clergy, monks, and nuns. I grant to them full security wherever they wish to be.

When a citizen faithfully fulfills his duties to the authorities, we the Faithful, as well as our families, owe in turn to grant him the necessary security…

Let them have full and absolute security as concerns their lives, their churches, their beliefs, and all their places of pilgrimage which they now have within or without the city.

This includes Church of the Resurrection, the Church of Bethlehem, where Jesus, may peace be on him, was born, the Great Church and the Cave with the three gates, the southern, northern and western ones…

Whoever breaks this covenant is the enemy of God and hates our beloved Prophet…

CALIPH ‘ALI (seventh century CE)

In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful…

Praise and thanks belong to the Creator of the Universe. Blessed by the great Muhammad and his holy tribe…

I have made this Covenant with them on my behalf, as well as on behalf of all the tribes of Islam [so that Islam] shall prevail, and the doctrine of Christianity shall continue.

It shall be the duty of all leaders and princes, and all men, to carry out our Covenant, by the help of God…

No man will dare to break or change this Covenant by increasing or decreasing it… Whoever increases it, increases his punishment… Whoever decreases, decreases our patience…

Those who break this Covenant will be considered traitors and allies of my enemies…

They are those who break divine commands and incur the anger of the one God.

Thanks to this covenant, there will be constant peace and tranquility between Christians and Muslims…

Christians must not be oppressed…

I do not want there to be any problems between Christians and my people [the Muslims] …

The Christians under my authority are my subjects and I am their ruler. It is my duty to watch over them like a father and to protect them from all evil and trouble…

They should not be bothered or oppressed. Their countries should not be taken from them. They should not be expelled from their countries.

The priests should not be converted from Christianity…

Monks and hermits should not be disturbed … or removed from their monasteries.

Their preachers should not be prohibited from preaching…

Their residences and lands should not be destroyed…

Nobody should remove or pull down the bells from churches...

No Muslim leader should force Christians to convert to the Muslim religion…

Treat them with kindness and tenderness…

Protect them from all sorts of oppression and difficulties.

If anyone breaks this Covenant, he is an unbeliever and an apostate, namely, a person who has rejected the Prophet of God…

It is the duty of Muslims to carry out these orders.

Glory to the Creator of the Universe!

CALIPH MUKTAFI II (1138 CE)

This is a covenant between Muslims and the People of the Book, whether they are near or far… The shadow of kindness extends to them all…

The Commander of the Faithful has commanded that the request from the People of the Book be granted and their wishes ratified. The covenant of the higher leader of Islam… is given to the leader of the Nestorian Christians who lives in the City of Peace, Jerusalem, and to all Christians who live in the land of Islam…

Following the precedent of past Imams, in their dealing with the leaders of the Christians, the Commander of the Faithful gives you and your followers the following rights: the lives and the property of your people will be protected; great care will be taken to promote your well-being; your ways of burying your dead will be respected; and your churches and your monasteries will be protected.

All of this follows the practice and example of the orthodox Caliphs and the interpretation of Islam by the great Muslim Imams.

CALIPH AL-HAFIZ (1169 CE)

Praise be to God, Lord of the Worlds.

In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful.

This command was given by our most noble leader, the supporter of God's religion, and the Leader of the Believers…

May the blessings of God be upon him, his virtuous ancestors, and his noble progeny…

The Bishop of the Monastery of Mount Sinai and its monks, who live a life of seclusion and prayer, presented a petition in our presence...

They have signed decrees from the days of al-Hakim and other records that they are honored to have received from these sublime states.

The monks asked us to renew the privileges that they currently have. We ordered that this command provide for their care and protection and make matters easy for them. We ordered that they be treated as befits their customs and that they be hosted well.

They should be helped so that they can manage their affairs well. They should be made hopeful and happy. They are to be protected wherever they are in the [Fatimid] State. And they should be helped to benefit from its bounties.

The Arabs are forbidden from entering the residences of the monks and robbing them from the savings they use to host pilgrims.

The monks should be exempted from taxes and duties in accordance with the decrees of the Prophet that they have in

their possession and which prohibit all attempts to change or alter the privileges in question or prevent them from being implemented.

The friends of the monks, and all those who work for them, must be protected. The same applies to those who gather money from them, be it tithe or alms.

No harm should come to those who secure their livelihood from them whether they are in Egypt, nearby countries or the rural areas. What is more, all taxes that were recently imposed on them must be dropped.

Anyone who reads or hears this decree -- including leaders who oversee war in the east, may God support them, or those in charge of fortresses on Mount Sinai, may God keep them strong, and all the deputies and clerks -- should abide by it, pay attention to its clauses, and be careful not to transgress it….

SULTAN MEHMET II (1463 CE)

Mehmet, the son of Murat Khan, always victorious!

The command of the honorable, sublime Sultan's sign and shining seal of the conqueror of the world is as follows:

I, the Sultan Mehmet Khan, inform the entire world that the ones who possess this imperial edict, the Bosnian Franciscans, have gotten into my good graces, so I command:

Let nobody bother or disturb those who are mentioned or their churches. Let them dwell in peace in my empire and let those who have become refugees be safe. Let them return and let them settle in their monasteries without fear in all the countries of my empire.

Neither my royal highness, nor my viziers or employees, nor my servants, nor any of the citizens of my empire shall insult or disturb them. Let nobody attack or insult or endanger their lives, their property or the property of their church. Even if they bring somebody from abroad into my country, they can do so.

As, thus, I have graciously issued this imperial command, hereby take my great oath.

In the name of the Creator of the Earth and Heaven, the One who feeds all creatures, and in the name of the seven mustaphas, and our great Messenger, and in the name of the sword that I wear, nobody shall do contrary to what has been written as long as they are obedient and faithful to my command.

SULTAN SELIM I (1517 CE)

The monks from Mount Sinai came to us. They humbly showed that Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, was hospitably hosted by their monastery during his travels and that, despite their limited means, treated him with all kinds of honor in respect. In return, he freed them from taxation. In confirmation, he gave them a holy covenant signed with his own palm-print.

In consideration of these facts, we also, out of our great mercy, command that the monks be free from yearly taxes and that they should be free to enjoy their churches and practice their religion freely… To this end, we have kindly ordered that an authentic copy of the Covenant of God's Holy Prophet be given to them that is confirmed with our seal and signature.

We command every person of power in our kingdom to not burden the monks of the religion of Jesus with taxes and political contributions. Whoever breaks our noble decree and command will certainly be punished.

SHAH ‘ABBAS (1599 CE)

We, the great king, whose empire extends to the four points of the world… declare… that our realms, dominions, and province will be open to all Christians from this day forward… The Christians will have full freedom to choose places already founded, of to found other places as well, for the practice of their religion, whether in public or in private, as it may seem good to them…. None of our subjects, regardless of their status, may cause the Christians harm, trouble, or hindrance of any kind.

SHAH ‘ABBAS (1604 CE)

Lord Pope of Rome… We do not fail for a moment in respecting and honoring the Christian community and in paying due attention and care to the Christian sect, who travel throughout our Empire. The Christian community that lives in our country is provided peace of mind in their places of worship, devotion, and prayer to the Lord, Creator of the Worlds. We pay them greater respect and greater esteem than we do to our own people.

SULTAN MUSTAFA I (1618 CE)

To the greatest judges of Egypt… To the greatest judges of Damascus in Syria, the city that smells like Paradise. To the greatest judges of Baghdad, the city that looks like Paradise. To the judges and their deputies. To all those in charge of money. To the military commanders. To the customs directors and the port directors. To the distinguished members of the Secretariat and to all men of authority. May God empower them.

When this royal decree of mine arrives, it should be known that Pastor Ghafril IV, Bishop of Mount Sinai, based in that blessed mountain since days of old, presented to our highness a signed petition.

In the petition in question, he asks us for a sacred decree in accordance with the records and deeds in the hands of the monks of the Monastery of Mount Sinai, as well as the text of the Sacred Covenant which was offered to the monks in question by the Greatest of the Prophets, Muhammad.

He granted the monks this document after they met with him and accepted the terms that apply to non-Muslims. This event took place when the Prophet was passing through the sacred wilderness on a visit to the Cave of Moses, peace be upon him, along with other noble pilgrims that he was taking to Mount Sinai.

Based on the generous privileges provided to them by the Caliphs, may the blessings of God be upon them all, and by the previous Sultans, the protectors of religion;

Based on the content of these decrees, records, and explanations preserved in the Royal Book;

Based on the Sacred Covenant (of the Prophet) preserved by the two monasteries on the Mount of Moses, peace be upon him, and Mount Sinai since the Days of Ignorance:

No military leader, nor any man of authority, should attack the monks, pastors or citizens of the two monasteries in question.

They are not to be attacked during their travels to Rumelia and Anatolia, to Egypt and Damascus, to the Mediterranean and Black Sea destinations, or to any cities and rural areas in Islamic States.

They are not to be attacked while they are performing their religious rituals nor are they to be attacked when traveling to gather alms from Christians to feed and clothe the ascetics who live in the two monasteries in question and who feed the foreigners who perform pilgrimage to their monastery.

The monks of the monasteries in question are not to pay taxes or customs on their personal income or belongings in any place…

The monks of these two monasteries have the right to own property by means of endowment to their monasteries, churches, farms, hostels, residences, fields, groves, and orchards, as well as their lands and winter pastures… their churches and palm orchards along the seaside, such as the monasteries and properties… their orchards, plots of land, and winter pastures … as well as all as those found in any other ports, regions, directorates, cities, and rural areas.

The monks also have the right to own property. This includes lands that they themselves purchased as well as lands that were endowed or given to them by other Christians.

The monks are not to be prevented from using their lands in any place and no taxes or fines are to be imposed on them…

No Patriarch or Bishop has the right, in any region … to intervene with the affairs of the monks [from Mount Sinai] or terrorize them as these are the rights of their elected Archbishop.

No one has the right to trouble them or treat them in any way that is contrary to the Sacred Covenant (of the Prophet) or the Decrees of the Sultans…

I have issued my order to you so that you can abide by the sublime orders that emanate from our illustrious ancestors along with my venerable order while avoiding anything and everything that might go against it…

Be aware of that and place your trust in my sacred decree.

SULTAN ‘ABD AL-HAMID II (1904)

The Ottoman Tughrah: “The Conqueror ‘Abd al-Hamid ibn ‘Abd al-Majid Khan, may he be victorious forever.”

The Egyptian Khedive informed us that His Holiness Burvirius, the Archbishop of the Monastery of Mount Sinai, has retired because his age and illness and that the monks from the monastery met and elected His Holiness Burvirius Yougotis in his place.

The Egyptian Khedive asked us to issue a decree accepting his election and appointing the said person as the archbishop according to established rules.

The regulations were reviewed, and it was found that electing ecclesiastic rulers was one of the rights that was

given to the monks. It is for this reason that we issue this Sultanic decree appointing His Honor Burvirius Yougotis as the Archbishop of the Monastery of Mount Sinai.

We order that no one interfere with their monasteries, churches, and orchards in the sacred Mountain of Moses and Mount Sinai; their church, palm orchards and olive orchards that are located along the seaside in the town of al-Tur; their monastery in the inner district at Bab al-Nasr in Egypt, the Protected; the two agencies on the right side of the mentioned district and its north; the church on the side of St. Catherine; their places of prayer and worship; their residences and agencies; as well as the other places of their endowments in Cairo. No law enforcement agents should enter their shops or stand in their way.

No fees should be charged from their orchards, their fig and fruit trees, as well as their palm and olive groves. The same applies to what they store in the city of al-Tur, in Syria, as well as in Egypt.

No one should stand in their way in their silk trade, their endowments, as well as their trees and farms in Cyprus.

They should not be asked to pay customs and entrance fees in the ports of the Red Sea, the Western Sea in Alexandria, Rashid, Demiat, Cyprus, Damascus in Syria, Nadis, Hauran, Qistah, Ghazzah, Beirut, Seida, Tripoli in Syria, Latakia, and other ports.

Customs should not be paid on soap, oil, grain, offerings, and alms coming from Islamic lands.

They have the right to visit their cemetery in Damascus, in Syria, according to their traditions. No one should stand in their way of burying their dead. No one should interfere with their graveyards.

The governors should fulfil their obligations [towards the monks] immediately and completely. They should prevent people from interfering with the rights [of the monks]. No judge, governor, trustee or civil servant should interfere with matters pertaining to the monks.

No Alexandrian Patriarch or any other Patriarchs of other denominations should treat them badly nor should they interfere with their matters in any way. They are free under the rule of their Patriarch.

Since our Prophet Muhammad, the Messenger of God, gave the monks a blessed Covenant and considering that the Caliphs and the Sultans followed his honorable example by venerating his Covenant and his respect for the shariah, they are to live in the mountain in question in complete security and equanimity.

In accordance with the Covenant of the Prophet, the honorable decrees and obligatory orders [of the Caliphs and the Sultans], no one is permitted to attack or harm the monks.

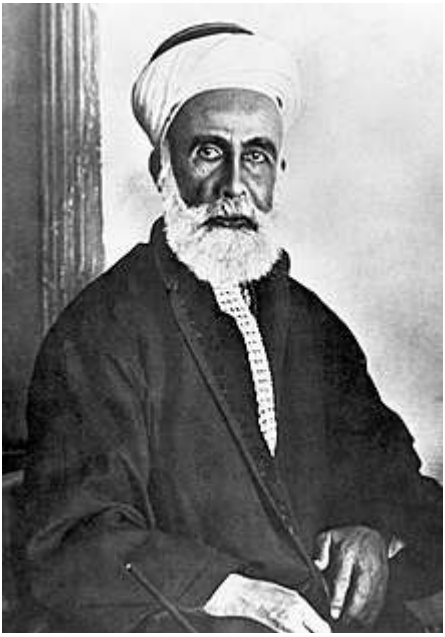
Anyone who fails to respect the Covenant of the Prophet and the orders that have been given deserves a severe punishment. It is for this reason that I gave my orders to them to follow.

Written on 15th of Ramadan al-Mubarak in 1322 AH, November 22, 1904 CE.

(Picture of St. Catherine's Monastery at Mount Sinai)

(A painting of St. Catherine's Monastery by El Greco)

HUSAYN IBN ‘ALI, THE SHARIF OF MECCA AND THE HEAD OF THE ROYAL HASHIMITE COURT (1917)



You are asked to protect and take great care of the entire Armenian, Jacobite, community, living in your territories, within your borders, and within your tribes; to help them in all of their affairs; and to defend them like you would defend yourselves, your property, and your children; to furnish them with everything they may need, whether they are sedentary or nomads, for they are a Protected People of the Muslims, about whom the Prophet Muhammad, may peace and blessings be upon him, said: ‘Whoever takes even a string from them, I will be his adversary on the Day of Judgment.’ This is among the most important things that I ask you to do, which I hope you will fulfill, based on the noble character and determination with which you act.

3.33 THE CONFIRMATION OF THE PEACE TREATIES OF THE PROPHET BY CONTEMPORARY SCHOLARS

The Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad have been authenticated by hundreds of scholars over nearly fifteen hundred years. For some skeptics, however, the consensus of past authorities pales in comparison to the consensus of modern-day scholars, academics, and critics. What do contemporary scholars say about the Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad?

"Although scholarship dismissed these documents as apocryphal or pious forgeries," writes Dr. Halim Rane, "recent analysis of multiple Covenants… conclude otherwise." Since the publication of The Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of the World in 2013, hundreds of academics, scholars, and religious leaders have examined the evidence and concluded that the documents in question are indeed genuine. A selection of their testimonials for the above book, as well as for its two sequels, *Six Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of His Time* and the 3-volume anthology *Islam and the People of the Book*, are presented below:

"A very interesting and crucial work." *Theophilos III, Patriarch of Jerusalem*

"The Holy Council of Fathers at Saint Catherine's Monastery expresses sympathy for your work." *Father Justin of Sinai, Saint Catherine's Monastery in Egypt*

"His All-Holiness our Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew has directed me to communicate with you. His All-Holiness would like to thank you for sending him a copy of The Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of the World. It is his fervent prayer that there will be greater safety for all Christians as well as greater security for their churches and sacred sites, which, as you well know, are regrettably missing in many places of our world. This is especially the case in the Middle East, where the number of Christians is radically and rapidly diminishing. Thanking you once again and congratulating you on this important publication, I convey to you the

greetings of His All-Holiness, and remain sincerely yours." *Archimandrite Bartholomew (Samaras), Chief Secretary of the Holy and Sacred Synod*

"A precious book." *Father Archimandrite Damaskinos, former abbot at the Monastery of St. George al-Humayrah in Syria's Valley of Christians*

"Congratulations for your efforts to promote the pacific coexistence of Christians and Muslims." *Fathermonk Kosmas Petritis, Simonopetra Monastery, Mount Athos*

"We live in a time when truth needs as much defense as peace. And there can be no peace between truth and falsehood. Dr. Morrow's book brings home the truth of religious pluralism within Islam, against all extremist violence committed falsely in its name. The Muslim treaties with non-Muslim communities contained in this collection model an inter-religious peace for all the world." *Imam Feisal Abdul-Rauf, The Cordoba Initiative*

"Almighty God has brought you on the scene during this chaotic situation in the world with a critical role to play." *Dr. Sayyid Syeed, National Director for the Office for Interfaith & Community Alliances for the Islamic Society of North America.*

"A much-needed project... The global community needs to learn about this." *Dr. Faroque Ahmad Khan, Director IMANA International Collaboration and Founding Member of the Islamic Center of Long Island*

"Six Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christian Communities of His Time makes an important contribution to our understanding of the early history of Islam. It also can help all of us to understand how we should relate to other faith communities today. The world will be a far better place when nations treat all faiths with the respect that these covenants embody." *The Rev. Thomas W. Goodhue, (United Methodist), Executive Director Emeritus, the Long Island Council of Churches*

"A valuable contribution." *Professor Dr. Abbas Mirakhor, First Holder, INCEIF Chair of Islamic Finance*

"A critical work… It is time for us to mean what we say, and consciously include the Covenants of the Prophet in Madrasas, and Friday Sermons in Pakistan, Indonesia, Malaysia, and other nations where the communal relationships are tense. It needs to reach the congregants repeatedly … to incorporate the idea of pluralism." *Dr. Mike Mohammed Ghouse, President, Center for Pluralism*

"A needed work in these trying times." *Catherine Orsborn, Campaign Director of Shoulder to Shoulder, a national campaign of religious and interfaith organizations dedicated to ending anti-Muslim bigotry*

"The Covenant Initiative has, as a whole been greatly instrumental to the promotion of Islam's most sacred principles. More importantly still, it offers a window into History many have chosen to ignore for the sake of political self-promotion. I pray others will see in this work the dedication of an incredible scholar to the Word of God and the essence of humanity. Dr John Andrew Morrow's tenacity against the poison of radicalism continues to be awe-inspiring. May God keep him always in His Light!" *Catherine Shakdam, Director of Programs for the Shafaqna Institute for Middle Eastern Studies*

"A work of critical importance at these challenging times... I pray that it will have the impact it so richly deserves." *Dr. Jeremy Henzell-Thomas, FRSA, Visiting Fellow, Centre of Islamic Studies, University of Cambridge, Associate Editor, Critical Muslim*

"This is one of the most important projects related to Christian-Muslim relations in recent decades." *Zachary Markwith, Graduate Theological Union*

"This work is much needed in today's world." *Shaykh Paul Salahuddin Armstrong, Director at Islam, Co-Director at the Association of British Muslims*

"*Six Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christian Communities of His Time* is a very important contribution towards furthering the knowledge of and changing the perception about the nature of the Prophet Muhammad and Islam. It is my hope that the book will also contribute towards furthering dialogue between world religions, especially the Abrahamic ones, as well as promoting world peace. Thank you, Dr. Morrow, for your work." *Andrzej Ahmed Saramowicz, President, The Rumi Foundation of Poland, Co-President of the Common Council of Catholics and Muslims*

"I recommend this book to everyone who is interested in a new positive slant on Prophet Muhammad's life, that has been mostly ignored until the publication of this seminal work. Masha' God." *Abu-Talib Son of AbdunNur, author of The Final Prophet, and Night Rainbow, an anthology of Classical and contemporary Muslim Psalmic Poems*

"100% support." *Mohammed Abbasi, Director: Peacebuilding Football for Peace; Co-Director at the Association of British Muslims*

"The efforts we make to 'come to know one another' as we are invited to do in the Koran, helps us create a world of peace. For Christians and Muslims to overcome a lack of knowledge about 'the other' we need resources that are authentic to our traditions; Six Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad is such a resource." *Noor-Malika Chishti, Vice-President of Regeneration and Representative of the Sufi Order International, North America*

"In our fractured world, this book -- reminding us that there have always been those promoting mutual respect and responsibility towards others -- is truly needed." *Sheila Musaji, Editor at American Muslim*

"My prayers are always with you." *Sayyid M.B. Kashmiri, Representative of Ayatullah Sistani in the US; Vice Chairman of I.M.A.M.*

"Seekers who have searched endlessly for the remedy and the antidote to abiding hatred, political extremism, and merciless violence need look no further: this is it." *Barbara Castleton, South Seattle College*

"This work represents a third foundational source for Islam after the Koran and the Sunnah… It is nothing short of providential that the Covenants of the Prophet have seen the light of day at this exact moment in history…" *Charles Upton, The Covenants Initiative*

"Fascinating, timely, and important." *Jayde Russell, Specialist Interfaith Advisor at Vision Enabler Consulting; Former Interfaith and School Visits Coordinator at the London Central Mosque and ICC*

"This is a much-needed project, more so now than ever." *Dr. Kevin Barrett, Co-Founder of the Muslim Jewish Christian Alliance for 9/11 Truth*

"May it come to pass, insha' God." *Daniel Abdul-Hayy Moore, the Ecstatic Exchange*

"I am honored to endorse this work." *Sughra Ahmed, Chair, Islamic Society of Britain, Senior Project Manager at the Woolf Institute in the Centre for Policy and Public Education in Cambridge, Trustee of the Inter Faith Network, Specialist for the Christian Muslim Forum, Distinguished Friend of the Migration Museum, and Research Associate with St. Edmund's College, University of Cambridge*

"An immensely important project." *Faisal Kutty, Associate Professor of Law and Director, International LL.M. Program, Valparaiso University Law School, and Adjunct Professor, Osgoode Hall Law School of York University.*

"It will not be exaggeration to say that after the compilation of Imam 'Ali's teachings by Syed Razi, the *Nahj al-Balaghah*, your research is the next most significant work. Hopefully, it will reach a significant

segment of the target readership in various formats. Congratulations. May Allah SWT reward you. *Dr. Syed H. Akhtar*

"I wish I would have known about the Prophet's Covenants when I began my interactions with Islam and Muslims. Dr. Morrow has done us all a great service in bringing the covenants together so accessibly, a very timely antidote to negative views of Islam." *Julian Bond, Former Director of the Christian Muslim Forum, currently working as Connexional Grants Team Leader, previously seconded to the Archbishop of Canterbury's Initiative in Christian-Muslim Relations for two years from the Inland Revenue*

"I am deeply impressed with your work: well done!" *Imam Monawar Hussain, DL, Founder, The Oxford Foundation*

"The Covenants of the Prophet are a game-changer." *Okolo Rashid, Founder and Executive Director of The International Museum of Muslim Cultures*

"This is the beginning of a blessed relationship/friendship on the path of spreading peace through our faith." *Tharik Hussain, Travel Writer, Journalist, Broadcaster, and Photographer*

"Rejecting the Covenants as mere pious forgeries is no longer tenable once we apply source-critical methods. The Covenants are historical documents whose authenticity can essentially no longer be doubted." *Ahmed El-Wakil, Researcher at Hamad Bin Khalifa University*

"The Prophet Muhammad is the central target of the current psychological tsunami of Islamophobia. In the absence of authentic information and critical thinking, people may get paralyzed by the power of political propaganda and misguiding media and continue their ignorant and unjust attacks against the integrity of a man who was sent as the messenger of mercy for the mankind. Six Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of His Time confirms the kindness and compassion of the Prophet toward the People of Book and the Christians in particular.

On the basis of these historic documents, Muslims must participate in protecting the Christian people, their lives, property, and places of prayer. These six covenants provide a code for creative communication between the Muslims and Christians of the world. This is exactly what we need in order to defeat the evil of extremism, be it religious, cultural, social or political. Thank you, Dr. John Andrew Morrow, for your hard work and awakening initiative!" *Imam Mohammad Ali Elahi, Spiritual leader of the Islamic House of Wisdom in Dearborn Heights, Michigan*

"Surely a must-read book which shatters myths of Islam and challenges mainstream narratives of Christian-Muslim relations." *Dr. Craig Considine, Rice University*

"A huge achievement which will most certainly help the cause of Islam and interfaith harmony." *Shabbir Abbas, Rutgers University*

"In the All-Embracing Name of Divine Compassion and Love. The re-emergence of the Six Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, from the enclaves of Christian monasteries, through the work and genius of Dr. Morrow, is a burst of light from the treasury of Islam in these times when so little is known in the Western world about the beauty and wisdom of the Islamic tradition. And how poignant that this treasure was preserved by monastic Christianity which the Prophet Muhammad vowed to protect.

The significance of the Covenants is more than an illuminating historical document. They can serve to re-educate Muslim leaders about the breadth and inclusiveness of their own tradition. And they can serve as a model for peaceful co-existence among the religions, pointing to mutual respect for each other's revelations and forms of worship, and mutual protection for the community of worshippers. This is not a political blueprint for nations, which are inherently at odds with each other, but the model for spiritual communities living at peace with each other in a Divine universe. This book is a document for world peace." *Shaykha Fariha Fatimah Al-Jerrahi, Guide for the Nur Ashki Jerrahi Sufi Order*

"This book documents what is possibly the third foundational source of Islam: the Prophet's treaties and covenants among people of the Abrahamic faiths. Dr. Morrow brings forth exceptionally important findings that dictate peaceful coexistence among Jews, Christians, and Muslims, and includes multiple translations for comparison of how the Prophet and his followers treated Christians and Jews with respect and care, far beyond a mere tolerance." *Dr. Bridget Blomfield, author of The Language of Tears*

"These covenants are not merely historical documents; they remain valid, binding covenants for all Muslims from the moment of their inception until the end of time. Dr. Morrow's work has illuminated a new horizon of Islamic public international law and promotes further scholarly investigation of the covenants." *Hisham M. Ramadan, S.J.D., Kwantlen Polytechnic University*

"This is a remarkable scholarly contribution: a collection of the covenants of the Prophet Muhammad, now made widely available. They form an integral part of his discourses, particularly because they concern non-Muslims, and mainly Christians." *Dr. Muhammad-Reza Fakhr-Rohani, University of Qom*

"Alhamdulillah. Thank you for promulgating this information." *Imam Rashid Patch*

"Once the non-Muslims in Muslim countries will be, insha' God treated with full respect, we will know as Muslims that the Ummah will have reached a truer and closer understanding of the Way of the Prophet." *Marina (Nouria) Bouteillier, Los Angeles Beloved Sufis*

"I am honored to be a signatory to this amazing initiative." *Dr. Hesham A. Hassaballa, Medical doctor and author; founding member of the Chicago Chapter of the Council on American Islamic Relations as well as co-founder and Executive Director of the Bayan H. Hassaballa Charitable Foundation*

"Our holy Prophet Muhammad, on whom be peace, was sent as a mercy to the universe. John Andrew Morrow has documented this in his book. We must all work together to reclaim the great heritage of our holy Prophet Muhammad, on whom be peace. This is the need of the hour!" *Fazeel M Ferouz, President, Central Islamic Organization of Guyana*

"Any rectification of historical injustice to the life of the blessed Prophet by prejudiced intellect needs our applause. It is the victory of intellectual honesty that transcends the confines of personal belief." *Dr. Munawar A. Anees, President, Rawi University*

"An enlightening reference that brilliantly sheds light on the glorious and magnificent spirit of Islam as epitomized by the Prophet Muhammad. I recommend that all Muslims should have a copy of the book and read it as a first study in this field. It modestly establishes a cross-cultural communication between all the three religions. I would like to express our deep gratitude for Dr. John Morrow for bringing these covenants to light." *Dr. Bouchra Belgaid, University Mohammed I*

"Islam is not a religion but a way of life in surrender to God, however if it may be called a religion, then it is the first interfaith religion. This Covenants Initiative more than supports my thesis." *Sufi John Ishvaradas Abdullah, Founder and Executive Director of World Without Borders Interfaith Sufi Ashram*

"The earliest biography of the Prophet (first compiled by Ibn Ishaq and later edited and published by Ibn Hisham some 200 years after the Prophet's death) -- which is the primary source material for all later and current biographic works, pieces together un-witnessed, un-substantiated oral accounts that in today's objective terms are highly inaccurate, embellished, speculative, politicized, loaded and emotionally surcharged –and no historical record at all.

Accordingly, those hostile to Muslims source it to project the Prophet of Islam in very lurid light that has given a boost to Islamophobic scholarship and created much fear of and suspicion about the Prophet

in the eyes of the non-Muslims, who, unlike the Muslims, do not see the legendary in it.

The Six Covenants of the Prophet therefore fills a long overdue gap in Islamic scholarship. It is the only historical document after the Koran that can claim authenticity for being recorded in full light of history and therefore it must be disseminated across the Muslim world as the genuine source on the noble persona of the Prophet and on his role in creating a precedent of inter-religious tolerance and harmony that the world has virtually failed to achieve thus far in history -- barring the era of Spanish Islamic civilization.

Its significance this day when the world seems to be heading towards a clash of civilization and the Muslims as well as non-Muslims are drawing on the classical biography of the Prophet to demonize or lionize Islam, the significance of this work cannot be over-emphasized." *Muhammad Yunus, Co-author of The Essential Message of Islam*

"The standards set by these treaties appear not only advanced for the time of the Prophet, they remain advanced in our own age." *Dr. Anna Maria Martelli, Italian Institute for Africa and the Orient*

"Today, we realize more than ever that either we will learn to live together like siblings, or we shall perish together like fools. These letters from the Prophet Muhammad to Christian communities can serve to inspire both Muslims and Christians about our ability to live together as God's people, as friends, as neighbors, and as custodians of the same small planet." *Dr. Omid Safi, University of North Carolina*

"A path-breaking scholarly work." *Mehraj Ud Din, PhD Research Scholar, Shah-i-Hamadan Institute of Islamic Studies, University of Kashmir, SriNagar, (India)*

"We all greatly appreciate your work." *Sultan Shahin, Founding Editor of New Age Islam*

"The translations of the Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christian Communities of His Time are a vital resource for both Muslims and non-Muslims alike. For Muslims, these Covenants belong to the Prophetic Sunnah, the practice they try to emulate and uphold, and are therefore both vital juristic examples for the further development of Islamic international law, as well as vital civilizational examples that divinely approved societies protect and sustain their minorities by default.

For non-Muslims, these documents can be added to another document of Prophet Muhammad, the Constitution of Medina, which belong to important contributions Islam provided to the foundational heritage for modern human rights. Islam, from the outset, ingrained religious pluralism into its rule of law, as it saw the protection of free will and human sanctity as a divine duty. These covenants are a testimony to Islam being a humanistic religion, and to the brotherhood the Prophet Muhammad insisted existed between the Abrahamic religions." *Arnold Yasin Mol, Fahm Instituut, Leiden University*

"Wherever I go I carry The Covenants with me (literally)… The Covenants and your work has given us a spiritual and historical arsenal to hit back against Daesh and other sources of strife and, moreover, give us a basis on which to build a movement for religious freedom and tolerance." *Abdul Rehman Malik, The Radical Middle Way*

"World developments re-emphasize the critical importance of voicing the Prophetic perspective as expressed in said Covenants." *Alim Ali, Muslim Perspectives*

"We hope there will be favorable interest in the meaning of the Prophet's Covenants in our time." *Stephen B. Young, Global Executive Director, Caux Round Table*

"It is always a pleasure to read your precious works." *Father Damaskinos, Former Abbot of St. George's Monastery in Syria*

"Your scholarly work is admirable and a great source of knowledge on Islam and its early relations with Christian communities." *Dr. Efstathios C. Lianos Liantis, Special Secretary for Religious and Cultural Diplomacy, Greece*

"Abiding by the Covenants of the Prophet with the Christians is to discover a dimension of religious consistency and a prophetic heritage that has its reflection in the convergence of Muhammad and Jesus, both as the last interpreters of the monotheistic tradition that traces back to the time of Abraham, and as servants and masters of the Truth." *Imam Yahya Pallavicini, Imam of the al-Wahid Mosque in Milan, Vice President of COREIS, the Islamic Religious Community of Italy, Chairman of the Council for Education and Culture in the West as part of the Islamic Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, and member of the Italian Minister of the Interior's Council on Islam in Italy*

"A wonderful work of enormous value… Rarely does a book demonstrate so clearly the relation of truth to peace. By underscoring the truth of religious pluralism within Islamic teaching, based on treaties the Prophet Muhammad and his successors enacted with non-Muslims, Dr. Morrow and his co-contributors to this book have also issued a passionate plea for the peace Muslims can bring to the world. These scholars advance a truthful Islam against the violence committed in its name." *Imam Feisal Abdul-Rauf, The Cordoba Initiative*

"Congratulations! You are doing it once again, surpassing your own records of scholarship, activism and intellectual brilliance. Our prayers are with you. You are playing a historical role in this divided world. The role of the Koranic and Biblical John seems to be assigned to you by the God Almighty, preparing us for the second coming of Christ, teaching the Christians and Muslims, people of all faiths to unite and promote peace and justice around the world in order to qualify for the appearance of the Prince of Peace. Thank you for this earth-shaking contribution. With tons of salaams and fervent supplications." *Dr. Sayyid Syeed, National Director for the Office for*

Interfaith & Community Alliances for the Islamic Society of North America.

"A very important document for this time." *Shaykha Fariha Fatimah Al-Jerrahi, Guide for the Nur Ashki Jerrahi Sufi Order*

"I greatly enjoyed reading all of the reviews of your work, which are well deserved, especially in this time of heightened ignorance, intolerance and even hate. Your message of tolerance is profound and universal." *Dr. Joseph J. Hobbs, Director, Vietnam Institute; Professor, Department of Geography, University of Missouri*

"A brilliant work… I remain amazed at your blessed vision and effort… We need to be more intimately familiar with your eloquent presentation. It has solutions." *Khizr Khan, L.L.M (Harvard Law School)*

"This particular work, edited by Dr. Morrow, provides valuable insight into the life of Prophet Muhammad beyond intellectually lazy writings and depictions which discuss the Prophet's life outside of the full breadth of his socio-political and religious life. Especially in this era in which many are promoting a clash of civilizations' narrative between Islamic and Western civilizations, this book serves as a tool to help dissect this framework." *Shaykh Dawud Walid, Executive Director of the Michigan chapter of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR-MI) and a member of the Michigan Muslim Community Council (MMCC) Imams Committee*

"A masterly treatise on an oft neglected but extremely important part of Islamic history which can shine a new more benign light on a most misunderstood faith." *Ervad Marzban J. Hathiram, Zoroastrian priest*

"This is a wonderful book! The level of scholarship is impressive. In this volume, [*Islam and the People of the Book*], Dr. John A. Morrow has found a cohort of experts to assist him in applying the closest look ever to the motives, actions, and divine guidance behind the Prophet's interactions with the Christians and Jews of his time. It is a positive,

hopeful, and grounded message which ought to be disseminated in the widest possible communicative arc." *Barbara Castleton, South Seattle College*

"A wonderful project and a valuable resource." *Rabbi David Sandmel, Director of Interfaith Affairs, Anti-Defamation League*

"[*Islam and the People of the Book*] is a monumental work that powerfully confirms and expands the scholarship behind The Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of the World." *Charles Upton, The Covenants Initiative*

"Building on Prof. John Morrow's seminal earlier work, The Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of the World, this latest labor of love brings together a dozen leading scholars to critically engage on a deeper and more specialized level with the covenants with Jews, Christians, and Zoroastrians.

Initially daunted by its sheer length, I must confess I was drawn into and blown away by this impressive collection providing historical evidence of the Prophet's instruction to coexist peacefully with others. In our time of hate and divisiveness, this is a must have scholarly work for both Muslim and non-Muslim scholars and the lay public on the truly inclusive message of Islam.

It is a timely and enduring work that will provoke debate and hopefully alter the current prevailing understanding. I predict that this compendium will not only be eye opening for most people, but it will also fuel years of further research into this critical aspect of Islam." *Faisal Kutty, Associate Professor of Law and Director, International LL.M. Program, Valparaiso University Law School, and Adjunct Professor, Osgoode Hall Law School of York University*

"Islam and the People of the Book provides a much-needed corrective to the notion that Islam in its origins and traditional expressions is a supremacist or coercive force in relation to other faith communities. We owe a debt of gratitude for this comprehensive work, a valuable resource in the understanding of the multi-cultural

and multi-religious principles intrinsic to Islam." *Shaykh Kabir Helminski, author of Living Presence, The Knowing Heart, and Holistic Islam: Sufism, Transformation, and the Needs of Our Time*

"The theme is interesting and according to the demands of time -- vis-a-vis -- the demolition of historical sites by the ISIS/Wahhabis." *Sayyid Muhammad Rizvi, Resident Scholar, Jaffari Community Centre*

"As for the Covenants of the Prophet, their significance cannot be debated." *Muhammad Yunus, Co-author of The Essential Message of Islam*

"The work of Dr. John Andrew Morrow in identifying and revealing the covenants of the Prophet Muhammad should be considered the most important revelation to the Islamic world today. With so many who have intentionally distorted the message of Holy Koran to justify their agenda, Dr. Morrow's scholarly study, based on the fatwas of the Prophet, leaves no doubt that the Jews, Christians, and Muslims are believers who should be protected by the followers of Islam until the end of days." *Gary L. Krupp, Pave the Way Foundation*

"I esteem your studies on the Achtinames of Muhammad very much… I believe that the Covenants of Muhammed are authentic. I also believe that the Covenants, if are accepted and applied by Muslims, will help in promoting coexistence between Muslims and Christians, in peace and stability, in many areas of the world, where Muslims live.

To tell the truth, I believe that if the Covenants were accepted and applied by all Muslims, there would not be any problems between them and Christians all over the world. Living in Holy Mountain since 1995, I have studied Ottoman law for over 15 years. I have found that the Covenants are the basis of Ottoman and the 'privileges" given by the Sultans to the Monasteries of the Orthodox Church.

Although mostly indirectly, the Covenants helped the monasteries to survive during the difficult period of Ottoman occupation." *Fathermonk Kosmas Petritis, Simonopetra Monastery on the Holy Mountain of Athos*

"A magisterial book." *Dr. Gregory H. Stanton, Founding President, Genocide Watch, Research Professor in Genocide Studies and Prevention, School of Conflict Analysis and Resolution, George Mason University*

"Your book deserves to be in every school and library." *His Highness Sheikh Nahyan ibn Mubarak Nahyan, the Minister of Youth, Culture, and Community Development of the United Arab Emirates*

"The importance of these Covenants of the Prophet, the subject of the noble quest of Professor Morrow, is that they allow us to understand, to interpret, and to grasp historical and literary references that have been long neglected. Through them, we discover the sensitive role that invitations, hospitality, collaboration, alliance, and meetings play and how such dialogue must continue, develop, and adapt according to the circumstances of the time." *Imam Yahya Pallavicini, Imam of the al-Wahid Mosque in Milan, Vice President of COREIS, the Islamic Religious Community of Italy, Chairman of the Council for Education and Culture in the West as part of the Islamic Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, and member of the Italian Minister of the Interior's Council on Islam in Italy*

"An excellent work… Thank you for pioneering this research." *Dr. Halim Rane, Associate Professor of Islamic Studies at Griffith University and 2015 Australian University Teacher of the Year*

"You have written a *Nahj al-Balaghah*." Héctor Horacio Manzolillo, Political Analyst and Professional Translator

"An excellent book… What fascinated me was not only the academic rigor of the scholarship, but also the benevolent vision of creating peaceful coexistence between peoples of different faiths by promoting tolerance through critical analysis of the core message of

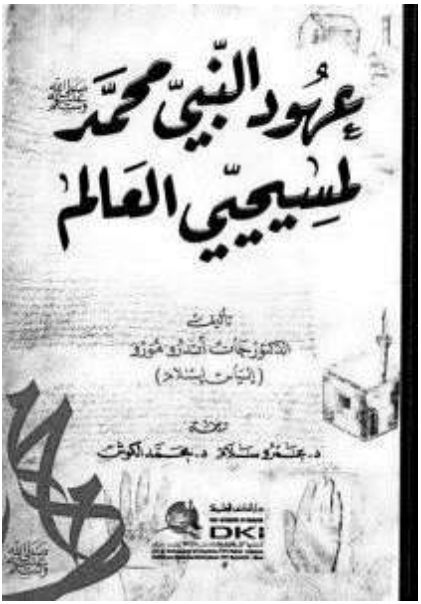
the Abrahamic religions." *Taha Poonawala, Fellow at the Center for Arabic Studies Abroad at the American University in Cairo and intern at the Center for Arab-West Understanding*

"I'm in full support of your initiative and your work. Always have been." *Shaykh Hamza Yusuf, Zaytuna College*

"I have seen with great passion the work of this brother and researcher, Dr. John Andrew Morrow, on the prophetic covenants and charters with the protected people from the People of the Book. In addition to the importance of the research and what it discovers about the deep-rooted connection between Islam and other religions, which are based on respect and mutual respect of rights, the book's appearance at this moment … is very important considering the dark views and extremist interpretations that have appeared on the world stage…

The release of these Covenants, which were concluded with the leaders of Christian communities, monks, priests, and bishops, is visible evidence that Islam is a religion that seeks and calls to co-exist in peace and security with members of other faiths, that justice, goodness, and safety are the highest of human goals, that people have the right to live in dignity and peace, that people should be free from religious coercion, and that no one should be deprived of protection…

I ask Allah, the Exalted, to bless this effort and maximize its benefit throughout the world, to thank and reward the researcher, and to open other avenues of exploration for him in this impactful field." *al-Sharif Ahmad ibn Muhammad Saad al-Hasani al-Idrisi al-Azhari, a guest of Great Britain, Founder of the Ihsan Institute*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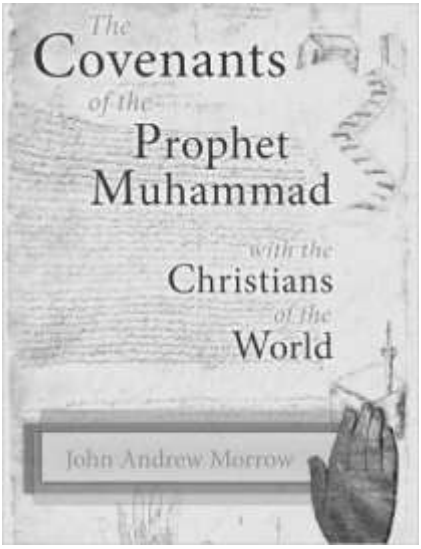

The
Covenants
of the
Prophet
Muhammad
with the
Christians
of the
World
John Andrew Morrow

3.34 ISLAM AND THE PEOPLE OF THE BOOK IN SPAIN, SICILY, INDIA AND THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE

Although there were exceptions, which must be condemned, the Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the People of the Book were observed by all righteous Muslim leaders from the seventh century until the twentieth century. When the Covenants of the Prophet were applied, the Islamic world flourished, the greatest examples being Muslim Spain, Sicily, Moghul India, and the Ottoman Empire. When the Covenants of the Prophet were violated, the Muslim world was mired in oppression and corruption.

3.35 THE INFLUENCE OF THE KORAN AND THE PEACE TREATIES OF THE PROPHET IN THE WESTERN WORLD

The Covenant of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of the World was mandatory reading for European and American diplomats until the twentieth century. It was viewed as a masterpiece of diplomacy.

3.36 ISLAM AND THE FOUNDING FATHERS

When the American Constitution was ratified in 1787, the Founding Fathers decreed that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise therefore."

George Washington (1732-1799), the first president of the United States, stated that

> The bosom of America is open to receive . . . the oppressed and the persecuted of all Nations and Religions; whom we shall welcome to a participation of all our rights and privileges... They may be Muslims, Jews, Christians of any sect, or they may be atheists.

When it came to workers, he judged people based on their character as opposed to their creed:

> If they are good workmen, they may be of Asia, Africa, or Europe. They may be Muslims, Jews or Christians of any Sect, or they may be Atheists.

John Adams (1797-1801), the second President of the United States and the first Vice President, described the Prophet Muhammad as one of the world's "sober inquirers of truth" alongside such figures as Confucius, Socrates, and Franklin and cited him as a model of compassion.

Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826), the third President of the United States, owned and read a copy of the Koran. He specifically stated that the Virginia Statute for Religious Freedom (1777) was written

> to comprehend, within the mantle of its protection, the Jew and the Gentile, the Christian and the Muslim, the Hindu, and infidel of every denomination.

Quoting John Locke, Thomas Jefferson asserted that

> Neither Pagan nor Muslim nor Jew ought to be excluded from the civil rights of the Commonwealth because of his religion.

Thomas Jefferson also had numerous accounts of the Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad in his personal library. Not only was Jefferson familiar with the pluralistic passages of the Qur'an, he appears to have been inspired by the principles conveyed in the Covenants of the Prophet. Consequently, both the Qur'an and the Covenants of the Prophet appear to have contributed to the creation of the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States, the Bill of Rights, and the foundation of the American Republic.

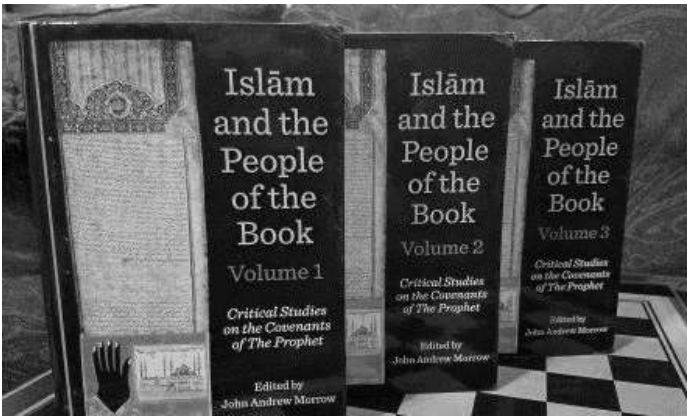
The University of Virginia, founded by Thomas Jefferson, includes a visual tribute to his commitment to religious pluralism. It features the statue of an angel carrying a tablet inscribed with the words

"Religious Freedom, 1786" and which includes the names God, Allah, Jehovah, and Brahma.

The Covenants of the Prophet were required reading for European and American diplomats Alexandre de Miltitz, the former minister of the Prussian king to the Ottoman Empire, included a copy of the *Covenant of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of the World* in his *Manuel des Consuls* or *Consular Manual* which was published in 1838. Likewise, Edward A. Van Dyck, a consular clerk of the United States in Cairo, Egypt, included a translation and commentary of the Covenant of the Prophet in his *Capitulations of the Ottoman Empire* in 1881.

The Covenants of the Prophet were still being discussed by American officials in the early twentieth century. G. Bie Ravndal, the American Consul General at Constantinople, wrote about it in *The Origin of the Capitulations and of the Consular Institution*, an official publication of the US government that was printed in 1921.

In 1935, during the presidency of Franklin D. Roosevelt, the Prophet Muhammad was honored by the Supreme Court as one of the eighteen greatest lawgivers of the world alongside Moses, Solomon, Confucius, Hammurabi, and others.



3.37 THE TREATY OF PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA AND THE OTTOMAN EMPIRE (1797)

Although some Americans believe that Islam has always been fundamentally at war with the West, the fact of the matter is that the Ottoman Empire, the most powerful Muslim political entity signed a treaty with the United States that was inspired by the Covenant of the Prophet. It reads:

> As the Government of the United States of America is not, in any sense, founded on the Christian religion; as it has in itself no character of enmity against the laws, religion, or tranquility, of Muslims; and as the said States never entered into any war or act of hostility against any Muslim nation, it is declared by the parties that no pretext arising from religious opinions shall ever produce an interruption of the harmony existing between the two countries.

3.38 THE MUSLIM CUSTODIANS OF THE HOLY SEPULCHER

Despite the negative image of Islam that is current in Western, corporate-controlled media, examples of Muslims abiding by the Covenants of the Prophet and co-existing with Christians are common.

The Church of the Holy Sepulcher, one of the holiest sites in Christianity, built on the site where Jesus was reportedly crucified and entombed, has been under the care of two Muslim families: the Joudeh family, which has acted as custodians of the key since 1187, and the Nusaybah family, which has been responsible for opening the door and allowing the faithful to enter the church since the seventh century CE.

“What we pass to the next generations is not only the key,” explains Adeeb Joudeh, “but also the way you respect other religions.” “For

me," he explains, "the source of coexistence for Islamic and Christian religions is the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, and that was when 'Umar ibn al-Khattab took the keys of Jerusalem from Patriarch Sophronius and gave security and safety to Christians in the region. We coexist and pass peace and love, which is the real Islamic religion."

3.46 THE CHRISTIAN WHO WAKES MUSLIMS FOR RAMADAN

In the city of Accra, in the Holy Land, which is home to Jews, Christians, and Muslims, one finds the *mesaharati*, namely, the one who wakes people up for breakfast. Each morning, at 2 am, Michel Ayoub, an Arab Christian, walks the streets of the Muslim quarter chanting: "You, sleeping ones, there is one eternal God." In this gentle and melodious fashion, he wakes the slumbering Muslims before dawn so that they can eat and drink prior to commencing a long day of fasting. "We are the same family," says Ayoub, "There is only one God and there is no difference between Christians and Muslims."

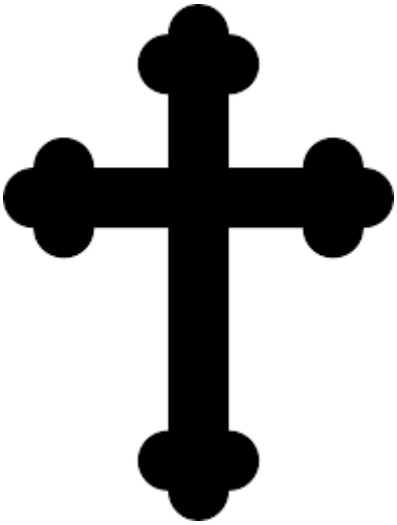
3.39 MOUNT SINAI: THE SYMBOL OF COEXISTENCE

The Monastery of St. Catherine's in the Sinai is also a living a testament to interfaith understanding. The site, and its surroundings, is sacred to Jews, Christians, and Muslims. According to Tradition, Muhammad visited the Monastery of St. Catherine when he was a young man and meditated in the Cave of Moses found on its peak. One day, while resting in front of the monastery, an eagle appeared which shielded him from the rays of the sun. Upon witnessing this symbolic event, the abbot foretold that Muhammad would become a mighty leader and obtained his promise to protect the monastery.

At the heart of the Monastery of St. Catherine is the Jami Mosque. Its minaret stands next to the church tower. For nearly a millennium and a half, the Christian church bells and the Muslim call to prayer mingled melodiously throughout the mountains and valleys.

3.48 REVIVING THE COVENANTS OF CO-EXISTENCE

Although the Covenants of the Prophet were common knowledge for nearly a millennium and a half, the memory of these documents virtually disappeared after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire in the early twentieth century. Thanks to the efforts of Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah, Ayatullah Ahmadi Miyanji, Zafar Bangash, Dr. John Andrew Morrow, Charles Upton, Dr. Craig Considine, Gary Krupp, Ahmed El-Wakil, and Dr. Halim Rane, among others, the Covenants of the Prophet are being revived around the world.



CHAPTER 4

IMPLEMENTING THE IDEALS OF ISLAM

4.1 FROM THEORY TO PRACTICE

Islam is a belief; however, faith calls for action. As Almighty God proclaims in the Holy Koran, “Let there arise from you a nation inviting to [all that is] good, enjoining what is right and forbidding what is wrong, and those will be the successful” (3:104).

Muslims are routinely accused of failing to denounce terrorism. In reality, they are at the forefront of over three hundred campaigns around the world to oppose sectarianism, extremism, fundamentalism, fanaticism, and terrorism. Although it would be impossible to list all these initiatives in the present book, the thirty most significant ones are presented in this chapter.

Each of the following initiatives is a tangible manifestation of the implementation of the Covenants of the Prophet and should inspire Muslims to become more engaged in the moral and ethical issues of the age. It is the obligation of Muslims to promote what is good and forbid what is wrong. We must all commit to social justice by volunteering time, skills, and financial resources for the betterment of society.

4.1 THE AMMAN MESSAGE (2004)

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

May peace and blessings be upon the Prophet Muhammad and his pure and noble family

(1) Whosoever is an adherent to one of the four Sunni schools of Islamic jurisprudence (Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi'i and Hanbali), the two Shi'i schools of Islamic jurisprudence (Ja'fari and Zaydi), the Ibadi school of Islamic jurisprudence and the Dhahiri school of Islamic jurisprudence, is a Muslim. Declaring that person an apostate is impossible and impermissible. Verily his (or her) blood, honor, and property are inviolable. Moreover, in accordance with the Shaykh Al-Azhar's fatwa, it is neither possible nor permissible to declare whosoever subscribes to the Ash'ari creed or whoever practices real *Tasawwuf* (Sufism) an apostate. Likewise, it is neither possible nor permissible to declare whosoever subscribes to true Salafi thought an apostate.

Equally, it is neither possible nor permissible to declare as apostates any group of Muslims who believes in God, Glorified and Exalted be He, and His Messenger (may peace and blessings be upon him) and the pillars of faith, and acknowledges the five pillars of Islam, and does not deny any necessarily self-evident tenet of religion.
(2) There exists more in common between the various schools of Islamic jurisprudence than there is difference between them. The adherents to the eight schools of Islamic jurisprudence are in

agreement as regards the basic principles of Islam. All believe in God (God), Glorified and Exalted be He, the One and the Unique; that the Noble Koran is the Revealed Word of God; and that our master Muhammad, may blessings and peace be upon him, is a Prophet and Messenger unto all mankind. All are in agreement about the five pillars of Islam: the two testaments of faith; the ritual prayer; almsgiving; fasting the month of Ramadan, and the Hajj to the sacred house of God (in Mecca). All are also in agreement about the foundations of belief: belief in God (God), His angels, His scriptures, His messengers, and in the Day of Judgment, in Divine Providence in good and in evil. Disagreements between the scholars of the eight schools of Islamic jurisprudence are only with respect to the ancillary branches of religion and not as regards the principles and [of the religion of Islam]. Disagreement with respect to the ancillary branches of religion is a mercy. Long ago it was said that variance in opinion among the scholars "is a good affair."

(3) Acknowledgement of the schools of Islamic jurisprudence within Islam means adhering to a fundamental methodology in the issuance of fatwas: no one may issue a fatwa without the requisite personal qualifications which each school of Islamic jurisprudence determines [for its own adherents]. No one may issue a fatwa without adhering to the methodology of the schools of Islamic jurisprudence. No one may claim to do unlimited Ijtihad and create a new school of Islamic jurisprudence or to issue unacceptable fatwas that take Muslims out of the principles and certainties of the Shariah and what has been established in respect of its schools of jurisprudence.

[Signed by over 500 Muslim scholars]

In declaring adherence to one of the eight schools of jurisprudence to be a duty for all Muslims, the Amman Message defines the contemporary Takfiri Jihadists as having placed themselves outside the religion of Islam. This is because the Takfiris reject these schools, treat those who do not follow their ideology as apostates, and ignore the principles of the traditional Shariah, which forbid forced conversions and command fair treatment of civilians and prisoners of war.

4.2 THE ISLAMIC SOCIETY OF NORTH AMERICA'S MUSLIM CODE OF HONOR (2007)

No group or individual shall use, spread or tolerate the rhetoric of branding others as nonbelievers (takfir) against anyone who believes in the oneness and supremacy of God, the prophethood of Muhammad ibn 'Abd Allah, peace be upon him, as the last of God's messengers, and in the reality of the Last Day, agreeing on the authenticity of the Holy Koran and facing Mecca (qibla) in daily prayers.

Muslims should respect one another and the people, places and events that any Muslim group or individual holds in esteem, even when they disagree about the relative importance of such people and events. Such disagreements, moreover, should only be expressed in a respectful manner, avoiding inflammatory language and insulting verbiage.

As to differences in the performance of worship, we agree to respect the rules in effect and the authority of the leadership that endorses them in a particular mosque or religious institution where they are the norm.

We agree that steps should be taken to perfect the general Muslim population in America from the distribution of divisive, inflammatory or irrelevant literature, primarily from overseas, in order to maintain the integrity and protect the future of Islam in America and curb the spread of harmful and misleading propaganda.

[Signed by twelve Muslim leaders]

4.3 THE FATWA OF THE FIQH COUNCIL OF NORTH AMERICA AND ISNA (2007)

In the spirit of this Season of Thanksgiving, a uniquely American holiday, the Fiqh Council of North America states its unequivocal and unqualified condemnation of the destruction and violence committed against innocent men and women.

This condemnation of violence is deeply rooted in true Islamic values based on the Koranic instructions which consider the unjust killing of a single person equivalent to the killing of al humanity (Koran 5:32). There is no justification in Islam for extremism or terrorism. Targeting civilians' life and property through suicide bombings or any other method of attack is prohibited in Islam –haram- and those who commit these barbaric acts are criminals, not "martyrs."

In giving thanks for America and for American people and in the light of the teachings of the Koran and Sunnah, we, the Fiqh Council of North America clearly, without hesitation, strongly issue this Fatwa:

1. All acts of terrorism are forbidden in Islam.

2. It is forbidden for a Muslim to cooperate or associate with any individual or group that is involved in any act of terrorism or violence.

3. It is the duty of Muslims to report to enforcement authorities any threat which is designed to place a human being in harm's way, bringing them before a competent court of law and in accordance with due process.

We pray for the defeat of extremism, terrorism and injustice. We pray for the safety and security of our country United States and its people. We pray for the safety and security of all inhabitants of this globe. We pray that interfaith harmony and cooperation prevail both in United States and everywhere in the world.

4.4 A COMMON WORD BETWEEN US AND YOU (2007)

In the Name of God, the Compassionate, the Merciful

Muslims and Christians together make up well over half of the world's population. Without peace and justice between these two religious communities, there can be no meaningful peace in the world. The future of the world depends on peace between Muslims and Christians.

The basis for this peace and understanding already exists. It is part of the very foundational principles of both faiths: love of the One God, and love of the neighbor. These principles are found over and over again in the sacred texts of Islam and Christianity. The Unity of God, the necessity of love for Him, and the necessity of love of the neighbor is thus the common ground between Islam and Christianity. The following are only a few examples:

Of God's Unity, God says in the Holy Koran: "Say: He is God, the One! / God, the Self-Sufficient Besought of all!" (112:1-2). Of the necessity of love for God, God says in the Holy Koran: "So invoke the Name of thy Lord and devote thyself to Him with a complete devotion" (73:8). Of the necessity of love for the neighbor, the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) said: "None of you has faith until you love for your neighbor what you love for yourself."

In the New Testament, Jesus Christ (peace be upon him) said: "'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is One. / And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' This is the first commandment. / And the second, like it, is this: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." (Mark 12:29-31)

In the Holy Koran, God Most High enjoins Muslims to issue the following call to Christians (and Jews—the People of the Scripture):

Say: O People of the Scripture! Come to a common word between us and you: that we shall worship none but God, and that we shall ascribe no partner unto Him, and that none of us shall take others for lords beside God. And if they turn away, then say: Bear witness that we are they who have surrendered (unto Him). (3:64)

The words: "we shall ascribe no partner unto Him" relate to the Unity of God, and the words: "worship none but God, relate to being totally devoted to God." Hence, they all relate to the First and Greatest Commandment. According to one of the oldest and most authoritative commentaries on the Holy Koran the words: "that none of us shall take others for lords beside God," mean 'that none of us should obey the other in disobedience to what God has commanded.' This relates to the Second Commandment because justice and freedom of religion are a crucial part of love of the neighbor.

Thus, in obedience to the Holy Koran, we as Muslims invite Christians to come together with us on the basis of what is common to us, which is also what is most essential to our faith and practice: the Two Commandments of love.

[Signed by over 400 Muslim leaders]

4.5 THE STATEMENT OF THE COUNCIL ON AMERICAN ISLAMIC RELATIONS (2009)

CAIR

Council on American-Islamic Relations

We unequivocally condemn all acts of terrorism, whether carried out by Al-Qaeda, the Real IRA, FARC, Hamas, ETA, or any other group designated by the U.S. Department of State as a 'Foreign Terrorist Organization." Condemnations have included state-actors, as well as other groups like the Jewish Defense League, Islamic Jihad, Lashkar-e-Taiba, Kahane Chai and the Riyadus-Salikhin Reconnaissance and the Sabotage Battalion of the Chechen Martyrs group.

4.6 THE SHOULDER TO SHOULDER CAMPAIGN PLEDGE (2010)

Inspired by our respective faith traditions, we stand Shoulder to Shoulder with our American Muslim Neighbors

Each of our religious traditions teaches that human beings have the opportunity and the obligation to build communities in which peace and mutual respect are core expressions of an ethical life. Our religions also teach us that we must stand up for the rights and freedoms of all members of the communities in which we live, including people of faith backgrounds distinct from our own. This vision of just treatment for all human beings is born of our religious faith and commitment to fundamental American values and is manifested through our support of the principle that religious freedom must be guaranteed to people of all faiths and of no faith.

In sharp contrast to this vision, recent years have too often witnessed a rise in hateful activity that seeks to degrade other religions and deny the religious freedom of many, particularly American Muslims. There has been an increase in hate speech, crimes and bullying directed against Muslims; growing opposition to the building or expansion of mosques; a series of state legislative initiatives across America aimed at discriminating against religious practice by Muslims and others; and policies and trainings for government and law enforcement officials that have been rooted in misinformation.

We are people of different faiths across the United States who are committed to ending anti-Muslim sentiment in our country. Together, we commit to standing shoulder to shoulder with American Muslims. We invite all people of conscience to join us to:

REFLECT on what will heal divisions in our communities;

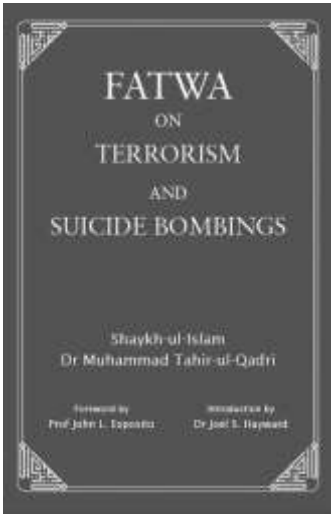
PARTNER across faith lines to know one another better and address issues of common concern, such as affirming and promoting religious freedom;

TELL the positive stories of these multi-faith partnerships publicly in order to report this reality to the media and shape public dialogue; and,

DENOUNCE hatred, bigotry, violence and the use of misinformation against American Muslims wherever we see it in word or in action.

Only by taking a stand together can we fulfill the highest callings of our respective faiths and help build an America that is safer and stronger because of our religious and ethnic diversity.

4.7 THE DECREES OF DR. MUHAMMAD TAHIR-UL-QADRI (2010)



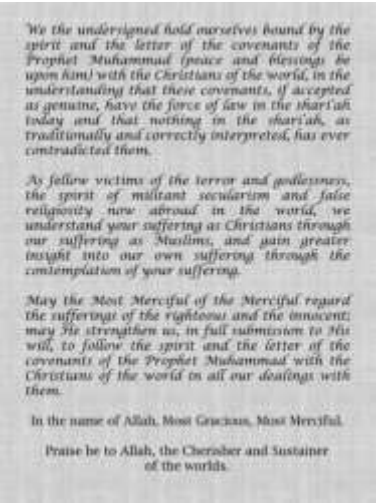
In 2010, Dr. Muhammad Tahir-ul-Qadri issued a 500-page edict against terrorism and suicide bombings. [include photograph of book cover]. In 2016, he decreed that that:

The ISIS ideology is Kufr (disbelief in Islam). It is anti-Islam; against the teachings of the prophet of Islam and those of Koran. I say it is the most heinous crime to declare themselves (ISIS) an Islamic state as they have nothing to do with Islam. It is a terrorist state, an anti-human state, an anti-religion and anti-faith state. I want to send the message that whatever they are doing is not jihad, but *fasad*, spreading corruption on earth. The people dying there in the ISIS are not going to heaven; they are going to hell because they are killing mankind, they are killing the innocent, the civilians. Capturing land, killing people and looting money is not Islamic ideology or any other religious ideology.

4.8 THE COVENANTS INITIATIVE (2013)

In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. We the undersigned hold ourselves bound by the spirit and the letter of the covenants of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) with the Christians of the world, in the understanding that these covenants, if accepted as genuine, have the force of law in the shariah today and that nothing in the shariah, as traditionally and correctly interpreted, has ever contradicted them. As fellow victims of the terror and godlessness, the spirit of militant secularism and false religiosity now abroad in the world, we understand your suffering as Christians through our suffering as Muslims and gain greater insight into our own suffering through the contemplation of your suffering. May the Most Merciful of the Merciful regard the sufferings of the righteous and the innocent; may He strengthen us, in full submission to His will, to follow the spirit and the letter of the covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of the world in all our dealings with them. Praise be to God, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds.

[Signed by hundreds of Muslim scholars, intellectuals, and activists]


We the undersigned hold ourselves bound by the spirit and the letter of the covenants of the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings be upon him) with the Christians of the world, in the understanding that these covenants, if accepted as genuine, have the force of law in the shari'ah today and that nothing in the shari'ah, as traditionally and correctly interpreted, has ever contradicted them.

As fellow victims of the terror and godlessness, the spirit of militant secularism and false religiosity now abroad in the world, we understand your suffering as Christians through our suffering as Muslims, and gain greater insight into our own suffering through the contemplation of your suffering.

May the Most Merciful of the Merciful regard the sufferings of the righteous and the innocent; may He strengthen us, in full submission to His will, to follow the spirit and the letter of the covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of the world in all our dealings with them.

In the name of Allah, Most Gracious, Most Merciful.

Praise be to Allah, the Cherisher and Sustainer of the worlds.

4.9 THIS IS NOT THE PATH TO PARADISE: RESPONSE TO ISIS BY SHAYKH ‘ABDGOD BIN BAYYAH (2014)

Introduction

All praise belongs to the Lord of the worlds. May peace and blessings be upon our Master Muhammad, the Prophet of Mercy and Messenger of Wisdom, his benevolent family, and his noble companions, perpetually until the end of time.

This is addressed to the young men who bear arms against their own nations and destroy both country and countrymen. You have abandoned all values and made enemies of the world. We call on you to pause, reflect, and heed this counsel for the sake of all who want good for our community…

For all who are troubled about the state of the Muslim world and long for its reformation, the Forum for Promoting Peace would like to remind you of and alert you to the following:

1. The responsibility of the scholars and religious authorities at this time in particular is to protect life…

2. Much of what is happening in the Muslim world now can be traced back to misunderstandings about aspects of Islamic law that are not problematic for open-minded and peaceful societies…

Some of the reasons for these misconceptions are as follows:

a. There is a disconnect between the Islamic dictates and their stipulations…

b. The relationship between means and end has been distorted…

c. The four values upon which Islamic law is built—wisdom, justice, mercy, and the common good—have been degraded.

3. Jihad is not synonymous with fighting…

As a rule, the state of relations between Muslims and people of other faiths and persuasions is one of peace. Jihad, in the intent behind its original legislation, is a search for "perpetual peace."
That is why all believers are ordered to enter into peace: "O you who believe, enter wholeheartedly into peace, and do not follow in Satan's footsteps, for he is your sworn enemy" (Koran, 2:208).

Believers are also ordered to accept any attempts at peace: "But if they incline towards peace, you [Prophet] must also incline towards it, and put your trust in God" (Koran, 8:61). It is also very well known that the Prophet, God's peace and blessings upon him, compromised greatly at the Armistice of Hudaybiyyah for the sake of making peace.

As for military jihad, that was prescribed for times when there were no global treaties or pacts leaving no means to convey the message of Islam other than with military support, and there were no borders that were acknowledged, unless they were maintained by force, or vast distances separated regions. Also, there were no weapons of mass destruction at this time. All of these premises are no longer the case. How can any Muslim who understands the texts and aims of Islamic law call for war against all other nations? One who does so is

foolish, ignorant of the true nature of Islam as well as the realities of today and seeks to sow corruption in the land.

4.There are many rulings in Islamic law that are not duties meant to be fulfilled by the individual; instead, they are the domain of the political authority or its representative. Among such rulings are military actions and the moral duty to enjoin good and forbid evil…

5. "The Islamic caliphate" was a phrase the companions of the Prophet, may God be pleased with them, accepted in order to denote the unification of the Muslims and their affairs under an administration that would uphold Islamic law and protect their lives, dignity, and wealth. But the caliphate is not a matter of theology; rather, it is a matter of law subject to legal stipulations, and it is one possible means among others that could be replaced today by other means in order to achieve unity between nations so that they may cooperate and complement one another.

Actually, for many centuries, some Muslim lands were independent of the caliphate and were still able to uphold the religion, safeguard the law and sacred sites, and ensure peace and security. This is still the case. Our religion teaches us that our understandings stem from meanings, not words and forms. Consequently, there is no religious duty to pursue the establishment of a caliphate by force—even if we assume it is possible to do so. What then of those who spread corruption in the land, kill the innocent, terrorize the weak, destroy mosques and houses of worship, and disinter tombs? As Ibn Qayyim records, the Prophet Muhammad, God's peace and blessings upon him, and the four Rightly Guided Caliphs never destroyed a church, synagogue, or temple!

6. All forms of oppression and aggression against religious minorities are in direct contradiction to the values of our religion. In fact, Islam calls us to do well by religious minorities, to place them under our protection, and threatens those who harm them with punishment in the afterlife. This is evidenced by the track record of the Muslim world, which has no peer in history when it pertains to people living harmoniously with religious minorities, beyond what basic humanity demands of equal rights and responsibilities. Hence, any aggression

of any kind or coercion to convert is unacceptable. Coerced conversion is invalid in Islamic law. Islam has nothing to do with this, as the Koran states, “There is no compulsion in religion” (Koran, 2:256).

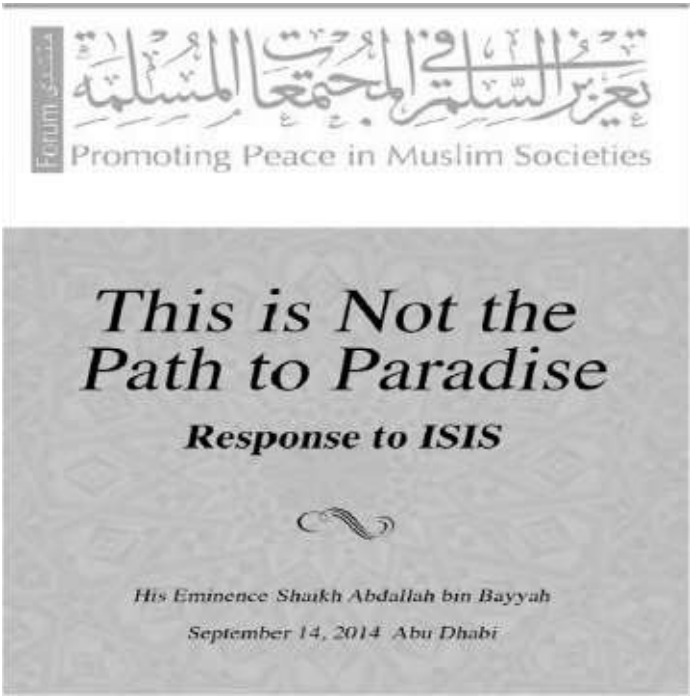
7. Fighting and conflict for reasons other than self-defense and repelling aggression are not Islamic values despite the attempts of some to dress it up as righteousness. These are values foreign to the Islamic ethos; in the Islamic tradition, destruction has never been seen as a foundation for advancement; rather, it is seen as a result of ignorance and fanaticism, the effect of suppression and feelings of frustration and vengeance. Our values are intended to instill confidence and love in the hearts, to repel falsehood with truth without any enmity, and to respond to wrongs with patience, pardon, and forgiveness: “Fight in God’s cause against those who overstep the limits” (Koran, 2:190). “Repel evil with good” (Koran, 23:96). “They repel evil with good” (Koran, 28:54).

8. Muslim societies need to inculcate peace as a goal and a priority…

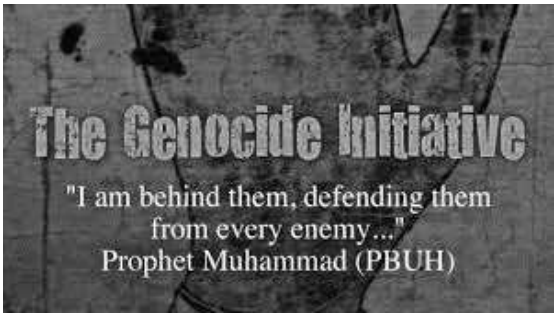
9. Lastly, a warning to the youth of the Muslim world in particular, lest they become fuel for the fires of strife and corruption in this world and become fuel for the fire of hell on the Day of Reckoning. We call on them to remain steadfast in the face of the empty claims and promises made before them and to live the Islamic law properly so that they will not be confused and duped into confusing falsehood with truth...

No Muslim is to be excommunicated unless he or she says or does something that is absolutely unambiguous and not open to alternative interpretations. The Prophet, God’s peace and blessings upon him, declared that simply cursing a Muslim is deviance and killing him is disbelief. God has declared the human soul as sacred: “Do not take life, which God has made sacred, except by right” (Koran, 17:33). God has also made killing one soul equal to killing all of humanity: “If anyone kills a person—unless in retribution for murder or spreading corruption in the land—it is as if he kills all humankind, while if any saves a life, it is as if he saves the lives of all humankind” (Koran, 5:32). Also, a tradition of the Prophet, God’s peace and

blessings upon him, states: “A believer will still have some leeway regarding his religious duties, as long as he has not spilled blood unjustly.”



4.10 THE GENOCIDE INITIATIVE (2015)



We, the undersigned, call upon all political powers: beyond all questions of political affiliation, and in the true spirit of human solidarity and decency, to categorize the crimes being committed by ISIS and other Takfiri terrorists against Christians, Twelver Shiites, Ismailis, Alawis, Sufis, traditional Sunnis, and others, as acts of religious, cultural, and ethnic genocide.

Before ISIS, all religious denominations stand in the line of fire. Christians and Muslims know only too well the bitterness and despair of a life spent under the ominous flag of Takfirism—a heretical perversion of Islam, also known as Wahhabism, which reared its hideous head a mere two centuries ago. Evil has a new face and it is Takfirism! Doing nothing while millions of lives are at risk is tantamount to murder. We owe it to our children to carry on this fight so as to prevent the shadow of our shameful inaction from falling on future generations.

Before the threat of Wahhabi-inspired radicalism the world can no longer afford to stand on the sidelines—the enemy needs to be engaged on all fronts: ideologically through the denunciation of its nefarious dogma, religiously through the coming together of people of all faiths, politically, militarily, financially … everything conceivable must be done and no effort should be spared.

We demand that local, regional, and international powers act decisively to neutralize ISIS and other Takfiri terrorists by cutting off their legs from under them—systematically dismantling their networks, whether financial, political or religious.

While we remain committed to peace, local populations have the right to defend themselves; and we have a duty of care towards them. Therefore, concerted efforts, in keeping with international and territorial sovereignty, should be made to combat this evil by all means necessary.

We urge political and economic powers to freeze all bank accounts of ISIS and other Takfiri terrorists; to seize their assets; and to prosecute any and all who provide material support to genocidalist war criminals.

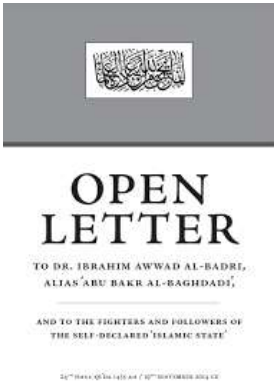
We further urge these powers to do all they can to determine how the black market trade in oil, drugs, arms, art treasures and enslaved human beings that ISIS and other Takfiri groups rely upon to fund their efforts can be interrupted and brought to a halt, and how anyone involved in any aspect of this trade, as either seller or buyer, can be prosecuted under existing laws.

We challenge all international organizations, human rights groups, intelligence agencies, national security agencies, law enforcement agencies, and military forces to coordinate their efforts to locate, arrest, indict, try, and convict any and all parties responsible for supporting ISIS and other Takfiri terrorists in any form or fashion, including, but not limited to, financial, military, strategic, political or ideological assistance. We call upon members of the legal profession to determine how the perpetrators of these crimes can be indicted under existing laws, including but not limited to those against criminal conspiracy, hate speech, and providing aid to the enemy in time of war.

Finally, we demand that any and all parties who have supported ISIS and other Takfiri groups, in any form or fashion, be labeled as war criminals guilty of genocide.

[Signed by 217 supporters; cited in the U.S. Armed Forces publication *Stars and Stripes* as one factor that led to the passage, in 2016, of the Fortenberry Amendment in the U.S. House of Representatives, which defined the actions of ISIS as war crimes and genocide and resulted in a public statement to the same effect by Secretary of State John Kerry.]

4.11 THE LETTER TO BAGHDADI: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (2016)



It is forbidden in Islam to issue fatwas without all the necessary learning requirements. Even then fatwas must follow Islamic legal theory as defined in the Classical texts. It is also forbidden to cite a portion of a verse from the Koran—or part of a verse—to derive a ruling without looking at everything that the Koran and Hadith teach related to that matter. In other words, there are strict subjective and objective prerequisites for fatwas, and one cannot 'cherry-pick' Koranic verses for legal arguments without considering the entire Koran and Hadith.

It is forbidden in Islam to issue legal rulings about anything without mastery of the Arabic language.

It is forbidden in Islam to oversimplify Shariah matters and ignore established Islamic sciences.

It is permissible in Islam [for scholars] to differ on any matter, except those fundamentals of religion that all Muslims must know.

It is forbidden in Islam to ignore the reality of contemporary times when deriving legal rulings.

It is forbidden in Islam to kill the innocent.
It is forbidden in Islam to kill emissaries, ambassadors, and diplomats; hence it is forbidden to kill journalists and aid workers.

Jihad in Islam is defensive war. It is not permissible without the right cause, the right purpose and without the right rules of conduct.

It is forbidden in Islam to declare people non-Muslim unless he (or she) openly declares disbelief.

It is forbidden in Islam to harm or mistreat—in any way—Christians or any 'People of the Scripture.'

It is obligatory to consider Yazidis as People of the Scripture.
The re-introduction of slavery is forbidden in Islam. It was abolished by universal consensus.

It is forbidden in Islam to force people to convert.

It is forbidden in Islam to deny women their rights.

It is forbidden in Islam to deny children their rights.

It is forbidden in Islam to enact legal punishments (hudud) without following the correct procedures that ensure justice and mercy.

It is forbidden in Islam to torture people.

It is forbidden in Islam to disfigure the dead.

It is forbidden in Islam to attribute evil acts to God.

It is forbidden in Islam to destroy the graves and shrines of Prophets and Companions.

Armed insurrection is forbidden in Islam for any reason other than clear disbelief by the ruler and not allowing people to pray.

It is forbidden in Islam to declare a caliphate without consensus from all Muslims.

Loyalty to one's nation is permissible in Islam.
After the death of the Prophet, Islam does not require anyone to emigrate anywhere.

[Signed by over 150 Muslim scholars]

4.12 THE FATWA SHAYKH AHMAD AL-TAYYIB FROM AL-AZHAR

We call for the killing, crucifixion and chopping of the limbs of ISIS terrorists. We express our strong dismay at this cowardly act [the burning alive of Moaz al-Kassasbe, the Jordanian pilot]. This requires the punishment mentioned in the Koran for these corrupt oppressors who fight against God and his prophet: killing, crucifixion or chopping of the limbs. Islam forbids killing of the innocent human soul... It forbids mutilating the human soul by burning or in any other way even during wars against an enemy that attacks you.

4.13 THE STATEMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL UNION FOR MUSLIM SCHOLARS (2014)

The recent declaration of a "caliphate" by ISIS is null and void and lacks any realistic or legitimate standards. The leader of the Muslim Ummah (nation) should be a representative of the nation, based on the people's choice of that leader, or their representatives. The mere announcement is not enough to establish a caliphate.

All the affairs of the state and religious political practice should be based on *shurah* (consultation). ISIS's announcement… Linking the concept of caliphate to an organization known to be extremist does not serve Islam… The concept of the caliphate is of extreme importance for all Muslims but requires consensus among Muslims worldwide regarding its form and content.

4.14 THE STATEMENT FROM THE ARAB LEAGUE (2014)

We commit to fighting ISIS both militarily and politically.

4.15 THE FATWA OF MEHMET GORMEZ, GRAND MUFTI OF TURKEY (2014)

Such declarations [namely, the declaration of a "caliphate" by ISIS], have no legitimacy whatsoever. Since the caliphate was abolished ... there have been movements that think they can pull together the Muslim world by re-establishing a caliphate, but they have nothing to do with reality, whether from a political or legal perspective… The statement made against Christians is truly awful. Islamic scholars need to focus on this (because) an inability to peacefully sustain other faiths and cultures heralds the collapse of a civilization… The caliphate is erroneously viewed as a religious authority by Westerners, who see it like a kind of papacy. But historically the caliphate was a legal entity that accepted religious references. It was a political authority. Muslims can no longer be unified under the rule of a single ruler like a caliph but can emulate political blocs like the European Union, aligning themselves along shared democratic values…

After a century of occupation, dictatorial regimes and suppressed identity, they are trying to express their vengeful anger and hatred by appropriating religion. The West looks for the roots of this terror and violence in religion, but these are not the wars of the Middle Ages, which were truly sectarian. An average of one-thousand Muslims are killed each day around the world, mostly due to internecine strife. Almost 90 percent of them are killed by other Muslims, by their brothers. Muslims need not look beyond themselves for the causes of

these conflicts. They should be aware that global powers have a responsibility but those are forces they cannot control.

4.16 CAIR'S CONDEMNATION OF ISIS VIOLATION AND REJECTION OF CALLS TO JOIN EXTREMISTS FIGHTING ABROAD (2014)

American Muslims view the actions of ISIS as un-Islamic and morally repugnant. No religion condones the murder of civilians, the beheading of religious scholars or the desecration of houses of worship. We condemn the actions of ISIS and reject its assertion that all Muslims are required to pay allegiance to its leader. CAIR strongly urges American imams and other community leaders to continue to speak out against American Muslims traveling abroad to join extremist groups and sectarian militias. While ISIS uses romanticized imagery in its propaganda materials, its human rights abuses on the ground are well-documented.

4.17 NOT IN OUR NAME: THE CONDEMNATION FROM THE MUSLIM COUNCIL OF BRITAIN

The Muslim Council of Britain once again condemned the actions of the so called "Islamic State in Syria and the Levant," ISIS. Today we express once again our rebuke of this reprehensible organization. We are horrified at the abhorrent murder of James Foley, a reporter who initially went to the region to expose the human rights abuses of the Syrian regime. ISIS has murdered this man for no reason at all.

Each day ISIS seeks to carry out an act more barbarous than the day before, craving the oxygen of publicity to give credibility to their heinous acts. We condemn unreservedly their psychopathic violence, whether it is on minorities, on civilians, or on fellow Muslims.

The MCB expressed the British Muslim community's common censure of the group as early as June and called for joint action to ensure the poison of extremism and sectarianism is not injected into our communities.

ISIS does not speak for Islam and has been repudiated by all Muslims. Their message only appeals to those who are easily duped by their twisted message purporting to be Islam. They seek to glamorize their violence, and unfortunately, the media has a part to play in adding to that glamour.

We urge the media in refraining from giving them any further undue exposure beyond conventional reporting. And we urge Muslim communities to re-double their efforts in coming together, condemning the barbarity of ISIS and persuading those gullible enough to take in their message that they are on a path to futility.

4.18 THE JOINT SUNNI-SHIITE FATWA (2014)

And hold firmly to the rope of God all together and do not become divided. And remember the favor of God upon you when you were enemies and He brought your hearts together and you became, by His favor, brothers. (3:103)

On Unity in Britain

Unity is of paramount importance and it should not be compromised under any circumstances.

As the name suggests, United Kingdom is a kingdom which is united, united under various colors, nationalities, cultures, and creeds. I believe that in this country we are one united nation and we should promote that to other parts of the world.

As British people, as residents of the United Kingdom, it is extremely important for us as diverse Muslim communities to remain united.

We consult one another. We benefit from opinions of others and from their experience and that is why it is very important to have this unity.

The challenges that we face are common to all Muslims and the threats that we face from time to time are also common to all Muslims.

I am grateful to Almighty God that Muslims in this country are united.

We should see all Muslims as Muslims with their different colors and different flavors and different traditions. That brings strength to our Ummah, to our community.

On Sectarianism

The sectarian issues are divisive, they corrupt the heart, they eat us and consume us from within. If we are people who are interested in saving our souls, then we must make sure that there are souls left to be saved.

The Koran describes us as one nation, one community. So, if we being to be divided along sectarian lines, then we are going against the teachings of the Koran. There is room for all of us to hold our diverse interpretations dear to ourselves, to get along, and agree to disagree.

The best policy that we can adopt is the policy of the Prophet and the policy of the Prophet has always been to bring people together, to accommodate them, to share love, to commit to peace, to commit to justice.

When we talk about commonality between Christians and Jews, and indeed we have a lot in common with them. Sunnis and Shiis: in whose interest is it to make us feel that we are not Muslims, one group or another, and worse than that that we should have bad feelings toward one another, and beyond that we actually should strike out in violence? It is from Satan and I am absolutely clear about that.

In this day and age, it is important for all of us to unite as one Ummah for the progression of humanity at large.

On ISIS and the Caliphate

Brothers and sisters, if I could tell you in one sentence, they are evil, they are corrupt, they are self-seeking, self-centered, vicious people. Don't get mixed up with them. We don't know who are behind them.

I think the best way to describe ISIS is that they are cowboys. They don't represent the religion. They are not qualified to represent the religion.

ISIS is not justified. We condemn that. There are ten conditions in the Khilafah. In theology is important that without them or in the absence of one of them the person is not qualified for Khilafah. None of these conditions exist in al-Baghdadi or other people who claim that.

As a Sunni Muslim, I do not accept the Khilafah of ISIS. I consider ISIS as a terrorist organization and they are trying to create corruption and fitnah within the Muslim world.

We are Muslims united against ISIS, against terrorism, against atrocity, against pain and suffering.

(Signed by 100 UK Imams)

4.19 THE ASSOCIATION OF MUSLIM SCHOLARS IN IRAQ (2014)

Praise be to God, and peace and blessings be upon the Messenger of God, his family, companions and allies:

We have known by the received news that the Islamic State gave Iraqi Christians in Mosul a deadline to be driven out of the city at 21 Ramadan 1435 AH, already they left the city and so it been free of them for the first time throughout the long Islamic history, starting from the era of the Message, passing through the Caliphate of the Umayyad, Abbasid and Ottoman, and other Islamic and non-Islamic regimes that permeated these periods.

The Association considers this act as an affront to the innocent, there is no reason to do it, and out of the right way that recommended by the Prophet of Islam, and the Muslim jurists explained after Him, how to deal with this component, and other people of Scripture.

The Association explains in this regard what is to come:

First, do not legally entitled to any party to take such measures that lack of a recognized State and Sultan represent the nation, and a legit judiciary well known among the people for his integrity and

efficiency, and scientists in the fatwa are renowned for their knowledge and piety.

Second: What happened to rob houses, money and collectibles, take place under the provisions of 'taken by force' in Islamic law, and all the scientists of Islamic Fiqh agree that who take money by force they must repay it to the owners, or compensate it.

Third, we believe that the duty of the time in these difficult circumstances is to protect the vulnerable people of the liberated areas and provide a decent living for them especially minorities; to cut the way before the phishers and the enemies of the revolution.

Fourth: Previously, a known parties sought to displace this component from the city of Mosul and other cities in Iraq, and had committed crimes of murder or threat of death against them in order to achieve its own interests, consistent with the targets of the enemies of Islam, the Association has already in its statements had alerted to and warned of that, and today, this act is offered to the enemies what already they tried to achieve by crime; as a free gift to them on a plate!!.

Fifth: Human marred by mistakes, forgetfulness, weakness and strength, and falls in sin, this is not a defect, but the trouble is going too far in it, but if he knew the right and went back to it thus this is a pride of him, Anas, may God be pleased with him, said: The Messenger of God, PBUH, said: 'Every son of Adam is a sinner, but the best of sinners are those who repent' (Narrated by Ibn Majah and al-Darimi).

Finally we call to fix this big mistake, which damages the reputation of Islam and Muslims, and to lift the injustice upon this component and to allow his sons return to their homes; because injustice has devastating consequences in this world and the Hereafter, and God Almighty swears, as in the *hadith qudsi* narrated by Abu Hurayrah, may God be pleased with him, which is considered authentic: 'The Almighty swears by His Pride and His Majesty: I will help you even after a while,' where the term came in its pan-concept, it did not differentiate between the oppressed Muslims or others.

4.20 THE DECLARATION AGAINST EXTREMISM BY THE MUSLIM PUBLIC AFFAIRS COUNCIL

In the Name of God, Most Compassionate, Most Merciful

Let it be known that,

Islam is from God, an expression of love to all of humanity;

In Islam, all human beings are entitled to dignity, regardless of who they are and the beliefs they hold;

The Koran declares that justice is divine and should not be subject to prejudices, tribal biases, or subjective desires;
In Islam, true faith is incompatible with compulsion;

Islam has no mediator between God and humanity; hence, there is no divine clergy or hierarchy with authority to act on behalf of God.

Islam confirms and upholds the teachings of Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Muhammad and all other Abrahamic prophets;

In Islam, no one has the right to claim they represent God or hold the absolute interpretation of His word or His intent,

Therefore, we believe that our mandate is to clarify Islam's message, revealing its truth in the face of ongoing exploitation, misrepresentation and misunderstanding.
A major obstacle preventing the true message of Islam worldwide is extremism. In this, we are not alone. Sadly, extremists contaminate all religions. Thus, with this document, together we passionately reaffirm our opposition to extremists of all stripes, particularly all Muslim extremists who betray Islam's true message. Furthermore, we pledge to collectively condemn and act to prevent extremism in all forms.

The Nature of the Problem

Extremists are defining the public face of Islam. The mainstream has been left on the defensive, vehemently wanting to share the true message of Islam. The voices of extremism are very loud; their voices garner false but almost instantaneous authority because they are cloaked in religious garb and theological jargon. These dangerous voices have misled people with false claims of religious superiority and authority. These voices exploit the uneducated and politically and socially disgruntled leading them to intolerance, oppression and violence. These voices distort Islam and disfigure the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

Cardinal Features of Extremism

1. Authority is monopolized by one person or group that claims authority from God, and opposition to that authority is equated with opposition to God.

2. The "will" of God is dictated to the people, who are not permitted to think for themselves and arrive at their own conclusions.

3. Coercion or imposing lifestyle decisions on others is viewed as sometimes necessary.

4. Blind commitment to tradition is paramount. Innovation and progress are condemned.
5. Conformity to cultural customs supersedes personal convictions.

6. Outward appearance is prized over personal character and spiritual integrity.

7. Extremists hold insular attitudes, which reject other civilizations and their value to humanity.

8. Power is derived from culturally based systems of patriarchy, subjecting women to inferior status and sanctioning physical harm.

9. The mercy and forgiveness of God is exclusive to one group.

10. Unjust and immoral acts are deemed permissible for self-serving ends. Today, we live in a world where the discourse around Islam is dominated by extremes, from both within and outside the religion. Extremism has negatively impacted how the world views Islam and provides fuel for anti-Muslim forces focused on marginalizing Muslim voices. Extremism is the main source of harm to Islam and Muslims worldwide. Extremism and its violent manifestations have shed the blood of countless people, the majority of whom are other Muslims. Anti-Muslim bigots have exploited scores of isolated incidents of theological and violent extremism to further their fear-inducing propaganda about the purported "global threat of Islam."

Extremism continues to rob our youth of pride in, and connection with their own faith thus making people feel their faith is irrelevant and incompatible with contemporary life. This then has the ability to create a barrier between the hearts and minds of Muslim citizens and their neighbors.

A Clarion Call for Action

Let's stand together and declare a unified and unequivocal condemnation of extremism by:

Rejecting any religious interpretation or ruling that contradicts the core Islamic principles of justice, mercy, wisdom and compassion.

Upholding women's God-given equal opportunity in society, rejecting the subjugation of women under any circumstances and

refusing to accept the notion that women are inferior to men in reason, wisdom and their ability to lead.

Objecting to outward symbols of piety being used as a measure of an individual's righteousness and adherence to Islam.

Embracing the positive contributions of all cultures and civilizations and respecting their cultural origins.

Fostering an environment where young Muslims feel proud and connected to their faith, and not alienated from Islam or the Muslim community.

We must respect all forms of religious practice and expression, as long as they follow Islam's mandate for coexistence with others, and uphold mercy, justice, equality, and human dignity. We offer a strong and clear message of the truth about Islam as a:

1. Spiritual path to inner peace and happiness.

2. Guidance for constructive solutions rather than destructive behavior.

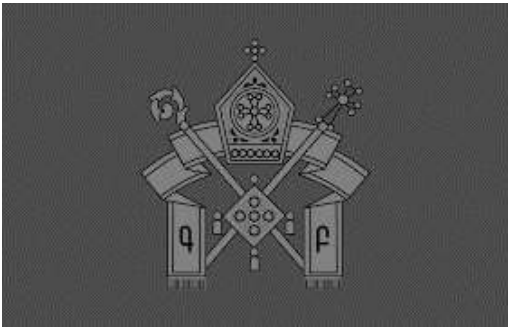
3. Call to serve all of humanity, not just one group or one people.

4. Celebration of the sanctity of life.

Islam is to be enjoyed, not endured. We call on Muslims, the majority of whom are outraged by harsh voices of intolerance from within their own faith; we call on scholars from all schools of thought; we call on women and youth who have been marginalized as second-class citizens in their own communities; we call on youth who are committed to building a better future for themselves; we call on you to join us in raising our voices in unison for the truth. We have nothing to lose, except the disfigured image of Islam painted by extremists.

4.21 THE FATWA FROM SAUDI ARABIA'S COUNCIL OF SENIOR SCHOLARS (2014)

Terrorism is a heinous crime and its perpetrators who should receive an exemplary punishment under the Shariah… It is prohibited to finance militants or encourage young people toward militant acts… Fatwas or opinions that justify terrorism are prohibited and are the order of Satan…



4.22 THE HISTORIC ISLAMIC EDICT ON JOINING ISIS/ISIL BY THE ISLAMIC SUPREME COUNCIL OF CANADA (2015)

ISLAMIC SUPREME COUNCIL OF CANADA
المجلس الاسلامی الاعلی کندا
le conseil suprême islamique de canada

In the Name of God, the Most Beneficent, the Most Merciful

All Praises is due to Allah, We praise Him and we seek help from Him. We ask forgiveness from Him. We repent to Him; and we seek refuge in Him from our own evils and our own bad deeds. Anyone who is guided by Allah, he/she is indeed guided; and anyone who has been left astray, will find no one to guide him/her. We bear witness that there is no god but Allah, the Only One without any partner; and I bear witness that Muhammad (peace be upon him), is His servant, and His messenger. May God's peace and blessing upon you O' the messenger of God (Peace be upon him).

FATWA (religious edict) on Joining ISIS/ISIL

We, the undersigned Imams, are issuing this Fatwa based upon the guidance of God in the holy Koran, the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and the consensus of the overwhelming majority of the scholars of Islam over the last fourteen centuries. We are issuing this Fatwa based upon the responsibility that God has prescribed in the holy Koran and in the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

Let there among you be a group that summon to all that is beneficial commands what is proper and forbids what is improper; they are the ones who will prosper. (3:104)

Believing men and believing women are protecting friends of one another; they enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong; they perform salat and give zakat… (9:71)

Those who, if We establish them in the land (with authority), establish regular prayers and practice regular charity and enjoin the right and forbid the wrong… (22:41)

Our beloved Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said in a Hadith:

When people see a wrongdoer and do nothing to stop him, God may well visit them with a punishment.

In the holy Koran God has commanded Muslims that, without validation, a Muslim should not believe someone he/she is not sure of:

O ye who believe! If a wicked person comes to you with any news, ascertain the truth, lest ye harm people unwittingly, and afterwards become full of repentance for what ye have done. (49:6)

When the Hypocrites come to thee, they say, 'We bear witness that you are indeed the Messenger of God.' Yes, God knows that you are indeed His Messenger, and God bears witness that the Hypocrites are indeed liars. (63:1)

There are several other verses in the holy Koran and there are several Hadith of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) clearly warning Muslims that there are and will be people apparently claiming to be Muslims but who, in fact, will be imposters who deceive Muslims in order to destroy them. Muslims must not trust such individuals or groups.

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said:

There will be dissension and division in my nation and a people will come with beautiful words but evil deeds. They recite the Koran, but it will not pass beyond their throats. They will leave the religion as an arrow leaves its target and they will not return. They are the worst of the creation. (Sunan Abu Dawud, 4765)

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said:

In the last days, there will be young people with foolish dreams. They will say the best of words in creation, but they will pass through Islam just as an arrow passes through its game. Their faith will not go beyond their throats. (Sahih Bukhari, 4770)

Who are ISIS/ISIL?

No Muslim ever heard the name of "Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS)" OR "Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIL)" OR "Da'esh" OR the names of its leaders until few years ago. The sudden appearance of hitherto completely unknown persons, trying to take over the Muslim lands and the leadership of the Muslims in the Middle East, is very doubtful and suspicious. A few years ago, ISIS/ISIL was created by the funding of Western countries to overthrow the Syrian regime. These strangers cannot be trusted. Their claim to establish a "Caliphate" (Khilafah Al-Islamiyah) is very suspicious and cannot be trusted. The reasons are discussed later in this Fatwa.

O ye who believe! If a wicked person comes to you with any news, ascertain the truth, lest ye harm people unwittingly, and afterwards become full of repentance for what ye have done. (49:6)

During the first century of Islam a similar group emerged in Syria and Iraq. They were extremely violent people who murdered many members of the family and the companions of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him). The Companions and the Family of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) identified and isolated that group

and called them "the outsiders" (*KHAWARIJ*). They did not accept them as a part of the Muslim community.

The strategy that the Khawarij used to destroy the Ummah is precisely the same as that being used by the ISIS/ISIL and other terrorist organizations in current times. The Khawarij wanted to establish a "Caliphate" (*Khilafah*) based upon their own political agenda. Today, ISIS/ISIL is using the same word, "Caliphate (*Khilafah*)," to misguide and manipulate Muslims. ISIS and other terrorists are using the policies of the United States and other Western countries in the Middle East as an excuse to control Muslim sentiments and then use them for their own political and personal gain. In our opinion, these aforementioned terrorist organizations are planted in Muslim countries to serve anti-Islam interests by deceiving Muslims in the name of Islam.

We, the undersigned Imams, strongly disagree and condemn those policies of the United States, Canada and other Western countries in the Middle East which are completely unjust, based upon Islamophobia, bias and intolerance towards Muslims. We also understand and condemn the highly destructive and hateful role of the media in intentionally promoting intolerance towards Islam and Muslims. However, in order to counter the anti-Islam and anti-Muslim efforts, a Muslim cannot choose the path of ISIS or other terrorist organizations like Al Qaeda, Taliban, Boko Haram, Al-Shabab, Al-Nusrah, Lashkar Taiba, Lashkar Jhangwi, etc.

There is very clear guidance in the holy Koran and in the Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) clearly guiding Muslims on how to handle anti-Islam and anti-Muslim aggression on the part of groups and governments. Under no circumstances Islam allows the following. The following actions are un-Islamic and completely forbidden.

Capturing opponents; Muslim OR non-Muslim civilians and beheading them.

Killing Muslims who disagree with beliefs and actions of ISIS/ISIL.

Destroying mosques.

Demolishing the graves of Prophets (peace upon them), Saints and ordinary people.

Forcing out Muslims OR non-Muslims from their houses and making them refugees. There are now more than eight million refugees because of the atrocities of ISIS/ISIL.

Murdering Islamic scholars who oppose ISIS/ISIL.

Encouraging Muslim girls and facilitating their travel secretly to Syria and Iraq to fight for an organization like ISIS/ISIL.

Burning enemy soldiers alive.

Mutilating a human body alive or dead.

Throwing enemy combatants or civilians from a height to kill them.

ISIS/ISIL have committed all the above violations in the most horrific and inhumane way. These actions are not allowed under any circumstances in Islam. Such actions are absolutely HARAAM (forbidden and major sin) in Islam and cannot be justified under any circumstances.

Nor can the struggle of ISIS/ISIL be considered "JIHAD." The clear guidance of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) regarding armed struggle (war) is as follows.

During a war (Jihad), a Muslim army cannot do the following. These are the Jihad ethics of Islam that no one has the authority to change. These are also the Sharia laws about Jihad that no one can change.

Do not kill children, even if they belong to the enemy.

Do not kill noncombatant men or women, even if they are from the ranks of the enemy.

Do not kill elderly, sick or weak people, even if they are from the ranks of the enemy.

Do not cut trees.

Do not contaminate water.

Do not destroy the places of worship of any religion.

Do not force people against their will to convert to Islam.

War (Jihad) cannot be declared by individuals or groups of people. Only an Islamic government with its authority on a state can declare war (Jihad) if the state is being attacked. (Note: ISIS/ISIL was not a government of any state. They were created by western interests in the region to benefit western interests by removing the Syrian government.).

ISIS/ISIL has violated all the above prohibitions of Islam. They have disobeyed the Koran and the guidance of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) therefore, their struggle cannot be an Islamic struggle and their war cannot be called "Jihad." Rather, it is pure terrorism and HARAAM. The behavior and the actions of ISIS/ISIL has consistently proven that they are NOT Muslims and they cannot be trusted by the Muslims.

Anas ibn Malik (May God be pleased with him) reported:

The Messenger of God, peace and blessings be upon him, said, "There will be dissension and division in my nation and a people will come with beautiful words but evil deeds. They recite the Koran, but it will not pass beyond their throats. They will leave the religion as an arrow leaves its target and they will not return until the arrow returns to its notch. They are the worst of the creation. Blessed are

those who fight them and are killed by them. They call to the Book of God but they have nothing to do with it. Whoever fights them is better to God than them." (Abu Dawud 4765).

Famous scholar of Islam Imam Ibn Kathir writes:

"If the Khawarij ever gained power, they would corrupt the entire earth, Iraq, and Syria. They would not leave a boy or a girl or a man or a woman, for in their view the people have become so corrupt that they cannot be reformed except by mass killing." (*Al-Bidayah wa Nihayah* 10/584)

We warn all Muslims, especially the youth, regarding the very deceptive un-Islamic, criminal nature of ISIS / ISIL OR Da'esh. This organization has recruited several Muslim youth, girls and boys, by deceiving them in the name of the Khilafah (Caliphate). Some Muslim youth from Western and Islamic countries have been misguided by ISIS/ISIL (Da'esh). We urge all of them to repent to God and leave ISIS/ISIL immediately.

We, the undersigned Imams inform all Muslim youth, girls, boys and general public that:

Joining ISIS/ISIL and groups like ISIS/ISIL is HARAAM (forbidden) in Islam.

Any Muslim who joins these KHAWARIJ (ISIS/ISIL) groups actually disconnects and disassociates himself/herself from the Ummah of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

Any Muslim who joins ISIS/ISIL OR similar groups disobeys God and His Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him).

And whosoever disobeys God and His Messenger (peace be upon him), and transgresses His limits, He will cast him into the Fire, to abide therein; and he shall have a disgraceful torment. (4:14)

Any Muslim who helps, facilitates travel, provides funds or encourages a Muslim to join ISIS/ISIL and groups like ISIS/ISIL commits HARAAM. Such a person will not only be punished by God for misguiding Muslims but will also be responsible for the crimes committed by the people he/she has motivated.

Any Muslim who helps, directly or indirectly, any organization, agency, group, individual or government which supports facilitates or motivates Muslim girls or boys to travel secretly OR without the consent of parents to join ISIS/ISIL or any other terrorist organization commits *haram* and will face the wrath of God in this world and in the next world. (No Muslim parents will ever give consent to join ISIS/ISIL knowing the un-Islamic nature of ISIS)

Ye are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in God. (3:110)

We strongly urge every Muslim, especially the youth, not to be influenced by the speeches, songs and the literature available on the Internet or on social media produced by the imposters pretending to be Muslims. This is a trap for young Muslims. They must visit their local mosques and discuss any questions or points of confusion with the Imam publicly. Any person who inspires people to cause harm to Canada and Canadians must immediately be reported to the Police. This is our Islamic duty, as Canada is a country where more than 1.1 million Muslims live, more than 1000 mosques have been built in every part of the country, more than 700 Islamic schools (madrasah) are educating Muslim children and adults, where large gatherings on Islam, Koran and Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) are freely and publicly held, and where every day several non-Muslim 'Canadians embrace Islam. Muslims have complete freedom to practice Islam in Canada.

Therefore, any attack on Canada will be an attack on the freedom of Canadian Muslims. It is the duty of every Canadian Muslim to safeguard Canada. May God save Canada and the entire world from the evil ISIS/ISIL and other of wrong doers. Ameen.

O ye who believe! Obey God and His Messenger and turn not away from him when ye hear (him speak). (20) Nor be like those who say, "we hear," but listen not: (8:21)

We pray for peace and justice for every human on this planet. And on us is nothing but to convey/deliver.

(Signed by 38 Muslim scholars)

4.23 SHAYKH YA'QUBI'S REFUTATION OF ISIS

The Islamic State in Syria and Iraq (ISIS) constitutes the most serious threat Islam has ever faced. To justify its horrible crimes and appeal to Muslims around the world, ISIS has based its ideology on a superficial and literalist approach to the Sacred Texts of Islam – the Holy Koran and the Prophetic Tradition. ISIS manipulates religion to brainwash angry young Muslims, who have little knowledge of Islamic theology and jurisprudence…. ISIS' actions do not represent Sunni Islam and its claims are based on clear fallacies.

4.24 THE MUSLIM YOUTH LEAGUE'S JIHAD AGAINST EXTREMISM (2015)

We declare their killing of human beings, whether Muslim or non-Muslim, to be un-Islamic.

Supporters of these groups have deviated from the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (SAW) and the Koran.

The emergence of the terrorists, who would use the name of Islam to justify their atrocious activities, was prophesied by Prophet Muhammad (SAW). He declared them as being out of the ambit of Islam.

We challenge ISIS, similar groups and their supporters ideologically and intellectually.

We reject all generalized Islamophobic labelling of Muslims as extremists or terrorists by the media, politicians and the general public.

We ask Muslims from all walks of life, regardless of the school of thought to which they belong, to stand united against extremists who have hijacked the true teachings of Islam.

We call upon scholars and community leaders to raise a united and unwavering voice against extremism.

4.25 THE EDICT AGAINST ISIS BY IMAM ILYAS ISLAM (DR. JOHN ANDREW MORROW)

My Mercy prevails over My Wrath," says Almighty God in a sacred saying (narrated by Bukhari, Muslim, Nasa'i and Ibn Majah). For Takfiri terrorists like IS, the so-called "Islamic" State, it is wrath that prevails over mercy. When asked to curse the polytheists, the Messenger of God, peace and blessings be upon him, responded that "I was sent as a mercy" (Muslim). If anything, the rapists, torturers, and mass murderers who have infiltrated Syria, Iraq, Libya, Egypt, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Somalia, Nigeria, and other parts of the world, can only be seen as a curse, the likes of which have not been seen since the Mongol invasion of Genghis Khan in the thirteenth century.

While Islam does indeed permit jihad, in the form of armed struggle, to combat certain oppressive conditions, it is highly regulated by a detailed code of norms and conduct. The killing of non-combatants, civilians, women, children, imams, priests, monks, nuns, and other members of religious orders is categorically prohibited in Islam. Torture, rape, and the trafficking of women are all crimes which merit capital punishment under Islamic law. The Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, forbade Muslims from sacking sacred sites and places of worship, stating that anyone who destroyed a church, or a monastery, would receive the curse of Almighty God.

IS, ISIS, ISIL or Daesh is a terrorist, mercenary, army at the service of imperial forces. They do not speak for Islam or represent Islam in any shape or form. To describe such psychopaths as Sunnis is to insult the Sunnah. To describe Daesh as "Islamic" is an insult to Islam. The only terms that adequately describes the ideology of these demons is Takfiri, Wahhabi, Khariji, and Nasibi, Excommunicators, Wahhabis,

Separatists, and Haters of the Household of the Prophet. While they call themselves jihadists, they pervert the term jihad or sacred struggle. While they call themselves Salafi, followers of the pious predecessors, they are an offense to the true Salaf, the righteous Companions and their Followers.

As Almighty God, glorified and exalted be He, warns in the Holy Koran, "Do not exaggerate in your religion" (4:171), a verse that can also be translated as "Do not be fanatical in your faith." The Koran also warns believers to "Beware of extremism in your religion" (5:77). In short, Muslims are supposed to be "a justly balanced nation" (2:143). Although some scholars may argue that the reproach against extremism contained in the Koran applies only to the People of Book, the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, explained that it was equally applicable to Muslims. In fact, he warned his followers to "Beware of extremism in your religion for it is that which destroyed the nations which came before you" (Nasai and Ibn Majah). In another tradition, he stated that "The religious extremists are destroyed" (Muslim and Abu Dawud). The Messenger of God, may God bless him and grant him peace, also warned: "There are two groups of people from my Ummah who will not receive my intercession: oppressive rulers, and religious extremists" (Tabarani).

The Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him, was confronted with extremists during his lifetime, fanatics that he himself rejected and excommunicated saying that they did not belong to his Ummah or Community. As the Prophet Muhammad, may Allah bless him and grant him peace, said, "The Kharijites are the dogs of Hell" (Ahmad, Ibn Majah, and al-Hakim). He also warned his future followers that the Horn of Satan would rise in the Najd, the very region in Arabia where the Wahhabi heresy took hold a mere two hundred years ago (Bukhari). As Imam 'Ali, may Allah be pleased with him, advised in Nu'aym ibn Hammad's *Kitab al-fitan* or *Book of Tribulations*,

When you see the black flags, remain where you are and do not move your hands or your feet [namely, "Stay put and do not get involved in the fighting"]. Thereafter there shall appear a feeble folk to whom no concern is given. Their hearts will be like fragments of iron.

They are the representatives of the State (Ashab al-Dawlah). They will fulfill neither covenant nor agreement. They will invite to the truth, though they are not from its people. Their names will be agnomens [i.e., Abu So-and-so], and their ascriptions will be to villages. Their hair will be long like that of women. [They shall remain so] till they differ among themselves, and then God will bring forth the truth from whomever He wills.

It should be noted, however, that Takfiri combatants are not committed Muslims. In reality, they are all mercenaries. Large numbers of them are non-Muslim soldiers of fortune and guns-for-hire, and many are drawn from the criminal class. "God is Beautiful and loves beauty," says the Prophet Muhammad, may God bless him and grant him peace (Muslim). Takfiri terrorists, however, are hideously ugly. "God is good and only accepts that which is good," said the Messenger of God, peace and blessings be upon him (Muslim). Takfiri terrorists, however, are devoid of good. Since "God is Just and loves justice," and "God is Loving and loves love," the true representatives of Islam are *Ahl al-Hub* and *Ahl al-'Adl*, the People of Love and the People of Justice. As Almighty God warns in the Holy Koran: "Do not commit evil in the land for God does not love the evil-doers" (28:77).

Takfiri terrorists, such as ISIS/ISIL/IS, as well as al-Qaedah, al-Shabab, the Taliban, al-Nusrah, Boko Haram, and other criminal organizations, do not speak for Islam or represent Islam. Not only are they not *Ahl al-Sunnah* (Sunnis), they are not members of the Ummah (Community) of Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, as a result of their own beliefs and actions. The Takfiriyyin, (those who believe that all Muslims, save themselves, are infidels), the Khawarij (those who broke away from the community in the early days of Islam, accusing both the Sunnis and the Shiites of apostasy) and the Nawasib (those who hate the Household of the Prophet and their followers) are agents of the enemies of Islam.

We do not condemn the Takfiris as "infidels who may be legally killed" as they do in the case of traditional Sunnis, Shiites, and Sufis. The traditional Muslim sharia does not grant *carte blanche* to kill someone simply because he or she is an atheist, an agnostic, a Jew, a

Christian, a Hindu, a Bahai or a Salafi-Jihadi. As Almighty God warns in the Koran: "Whosoever kills a human being unless it be for manslaughter or for mischief in the land, it shall be as if he had killed all of humanity" (5:32).

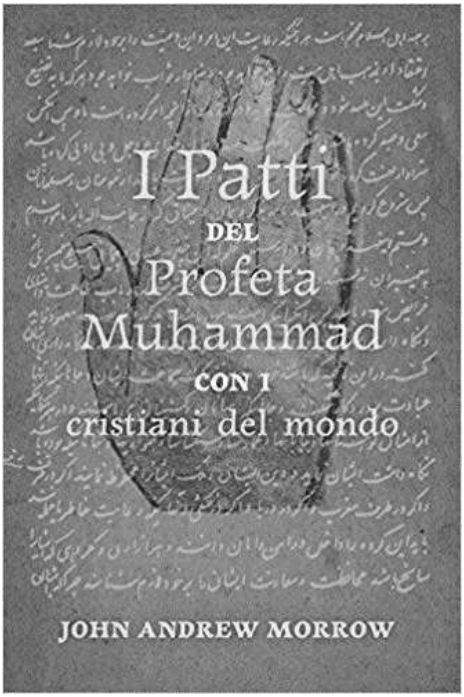
Although people cannot be condemned to death on the basis of their beliefs, they can be killed in combat or receive the death penalty on the basis of their actions. Consequently, any and all terrorists who have committed crimes against humanity and the Divinity should be brought to justice. And while Shimr may have murdered Imam Husayn, the grandson of the Prophet, peace and blessings be upon him, the true culprit was Yazid, his Commander in Chief, may the curse of God be upon him. Likewise, while Takfiri terrorists should be held accountable for their crimes, those who founded them, funded them, armed them, trained them, and supported them, in any form or fashion, should be exposed and face the sword of justice.

The so-called "Islamic State" should be known as the "Satanic State" as it does nothing but spread corruption on earth. Territory under the control of Takfiri terrorists is the abode of unbelief, falsehood, heresy, and immorality. They represent the path of error, the pulpit of discord, the den of iniquity, and the land of criminals. The Takfiris are the enemies of God and His Messenger. As such, it is categorically prohibited to support them in any form or fashion. Moreover, it is the obligation of all Muslims from *Ahl al-Sunnah*, *Ahl al-Tasawwuf*, and *Ahl al-Bayt* (the Sunnis, the Sufis, and the Shiites), to oppose the polytheism, hypocrisy, apostasy, and schism that the Takfiris are spreading throughout the lands of Islam.

The only people authorized to establish the Government of God on Earth are the Mahdi and Jesus, the Son of Mary, peace be upon them both. As we anxiously await their rise, we must stand for peace and justice, uphold Islamic ethical values, defend human dignity, and respect and preserve human life. Do not be deceived during these times of trials and tribulations. People who rape, torture, mutilate and murder civilians, non-combatants, hostages and prisoners of war are not Friends of God. People who destroy places of worship and sacred sites, who burn churches and blow up mosques with copies of the Holy Koran still in them, are not Friends of God. People who violate

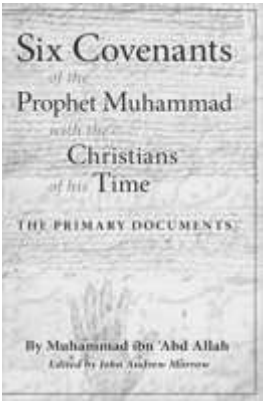
the teachings of the Koran, the Sunnah, the sharia, and the Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him, are not the Friends of God. If anything, they are the Friends of Satan. As Muslims, our response towards terrorists can only be one: “Fight the friends of Satan” (Koran 4:76); “And slay them wherever you may come upon them, and drive them away from wherever they drove you away for tumult and oppression is even worse than slaughter” (Koran 2:191).

In light of the non-Islamic character of the Takfiris and their role as agents of western and globalist imperialism against Islam, Muslims should find it easy to see through their absurd claim to be “defenders of Islam!” In light of the great deceptions of these times, lets us pray--in the words of the Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him--“O Lord, show me things as they really are.”



4.26 THE MASS FATWA BY 100,000 MUSLIM CLERICS FROM INDIA, BANGLADESH, AND BEYOND (2016)

Jihad and terrorism are not the same. Jihad is a key teaching of Islam while terrorism is haram and illegal. Suicide and suicide killings are haram in the eyes of Islam. It is not legal in Islam to mass murder innocent people. Even killing someone on suspicion is forbidden. Anyone killing a non-Muslim who lives in a Muslim society would never even get to smell heaven. Attacking worship places of non-Muslims such as churches, pagodas, and temples, is haram and illegal in the eyes of Islam. It is a sternly punishable offence.



4.27 THE MARRAKESH DECLARATION ON THE RIGHTS OF RELIGIOUS MINORITIES IN PREDOMINANTLY MUSLIM MAJORITY COMMUNITIES: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (2016)

In the Name of God, the All-Merciful, the All-Compassionate

WHEREAS, conditions in various parts of the Muslim World have deteriorated dangerously due to the use of violence and armed struggle as a tool for settling conflicts and imposing one's point of view;

WHEREAS, this situation has also weakened the authority of legitimate governments and enabled criminal groups to issue edicts attributed to Islam, but which, in fact, alarmingly distort its fundamental principles and goals in ways that have seriously harmed the population as a whole;

WHEREAS, this year marks the 1,400th anniversary of the Charter of Medina, a constitutional contract between the Prophet Muhammad, God's peace and blessings be upon him, and the people of Medina, which guaranteed the religious liberty of all, regardless of faith;

WHEREAS, hundreds of Muslim scholars and intellectuals from over 120 countries, along with representatives of Islamic and international organizations, as well as leaders from diverse religious groups and nationalities, gathered in Marrakesh on this date to reaffirm the principles of the Charter of Medina at a major conference;

WHEREAS, this conference was held under the auspices of His Majesty, King Mohammed VI of Morocco, and organized jointly by the Ministry of Endowment and Islamic Affairs in the Kingdom of Morocco and the Forum for Promoting Peace in Muslim Societies based in the United Arab Emirates;

AND NOTING the gravity of this situation afflicting Muslims as well as peoples of other faiths throughout the world, and after thorough deliberation and discussion, the convened Muslim scholars and intellectuals:

DECLARE HEREBY our firm commitment to the principles articulated in the Charter of Medina, whose provisions contained a number of the principles of constitutional contractual citizenship, such as freedom of movement, property ownership, mutual solidarity and defense, as well as principles of justice and equality before the law; and that,

The objectives of the Charter of Medina provide a suitable framework for national constitutions in countries with Muslim majorities, and the United Nations Charter and related documents, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, are in harmony with the Charter of Medina, including consideration for public order.

NOTING FURTHER that deep reflection upon the various crises afflicting humanity underscores the inevitable and urgent need for cooperation among all religious groups, we

AFFIRM HEREBY that such cooperation must be based on a "Common Word," requiring that such cooperation must go beyond

mutual tolerance and respect, to providing full protection for the rights and liberties to all religious groups in a civilized manner that eschews coercion, bias, and arrogance.

BASED ON ALL OF THE ABOVE, we hereby:

Call upon Muslim scholars and intellectuals around the world to develop a jurisprudence of the concept of "citizenship" which is inclusive of diverse groups. Such jurisprudence shall be rooted in Islamic tradition and principles and mindful of global changes.

Urge Muslim educational institutions and authorities to conduct a courageous review of educational curricula that addresses honestly and effectively any material that instigates aggression and extremism, leads to war and chaos, and results in the destruction of our shared societies;

Call upon politicians and decision makers to take the political and legal steps necessary to establish a constitutional contractual relationship among its citizens, and to support all formulations and initiatives that aim to fortify relations and understanding among the various religious groups in the Muslim World;

Call upon the educated, artistic, and creative members of our societies, as well as organizations of civil society, to establish a broad movement for the just treatment of religious minorities in Muslim countries and to raise awareness as to their rights, and to work together to ensure the success of these efforts.

Call upon the various religious groups bound by the same national fabric to address their mutual state of selective amnesia that blocks memories of centuries of joint and shared living on the same land; we call upon them to rebuild the past by reviving this tradition of conviviality, and restoring our shared trust that has been eroded by extremists using acts of terror and aggression;

Call upon representatives of the various religions, sects and denominations to confront all forms of religious bigotry, vilification, and degradation of what people hold sacred, as well as all speech that promotes hatred and bigotry; AND FINALLY,

AFFIRM that it is unconscionable to employ religion for the purpose of aggressing upon the rights of religious minorities in Muslim countries.

4.28 THE GROZNY DECLARATION (2016)

مجلس حكماء المسلمين
Muslim Council of Elders

The Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah [the People of Tradition and the Congregation, namely, the Sunnis] are those who follow:

The Ash'ari or Maturidi schools in doctrine—including the Ahl al-Hadith who adopted the principle of consignment.

The Hanafi, Maliki, Shafi or Hanbali schools in Islamic law and jurisprudence

The path of spirituality in its manifestation as science and practice, namely the adornment of noble character and purification of the heart, as exemplified in the order of al-Junayd and the imams who followed his way.

The methodology of Ahl al-Sunnah honors all the different sciences which serve the Koranic revelation and identifies the features and higher aims of this religion, namely preserving human life, protecting the mind, protecting the religion from distortion, protecting people's property and honor, and upholding noble character.

The Koran can be likened to a sacred precinct surrounded by sciences which serve it. They help to derive its meanings, extract the knowledge contained in it and understand its higher aims and ultimate purposes, which enable people to attain God's proximity. They help translate its verses into a living civilization and a means of spreading peace and safety in the world. Its verses are manifested in the form of the arts, noble character, mercy, ease, belief and prosperous development. The various peoples, cultures and civilizations of the world will then see with their own eyes that this religion is a source of mercy for the whole of creation and a means of attaining felicity in this life and the next.

The scholastic methodology of the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah is the most comprehensive and precise of all the Islamic methodologies and the most developed in terms of selection of scholarly works and curricula. They provide the best and most sound method by which the Muslim intellect is able to comprehend Sacred Law and understand world affairs in all their complexity and reconcile between the two.

The institutes of knowledge which represent the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah have produced hundreds of thousands of scholars and graduates over the centuries who spread throughout the world from Siberia to Nigeria and from Tangiers to Jakarta. They held various posts and positions: some issued legal responsa (fatwa), some were judges, some were teachers, and some were preachers. They extinguished the fires of conflict and dissension, brought security and stability to society and spread knowledge and awareness.

Throughout history, the scholars of the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah monitored the emergence of every deviant sect, faction and group, documented its theological claims and statements and used scientific criteria to critique and refute those claims. They were decisive in confronting erroneous thought as it appeared and employed time-tested scholarly tools to clarify and correct aberrations.

Where the scholastic methodology of the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah was present and active, waves of extremism were driven back and the affairs of the Muhammadan community were in order, allowing them to turn their devotion to building civilization. Geniuses from among the scholars of the religion thus emerged who contributed to the development of algebra, trigonometry, geometry, algorithms, medicine, eye surgery, psychology, oncology, epidemiography, embryology, pharmacology, biology, gravity, astronomy, the environment, phonetics and optics. This was the product of the methodology of the Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah.

Throughout history, erroneous ideologies have appeared that claimed to derive their beliefs from divine revelation. They rebelled against the sound scholastic methodology of the Ahl al-Sunnah and tried to destroy it. They caused instability and threatened people's safety. The first of these harmful waves was the Khawarij. They have once again appeared in modern times in the form of Salafi-takfirists, Daesh (so-called 'Islamic State') and similar extremist groups. What these groups have in common amongst their adherents is distortions of the over-zealous, forgeries of the fabricators, and misinterpretations of the ignorant. This has given rise to dozens of false concepts and incorrect interpretations, the result of which has been *takfir*, destruction, bloodshed and distortion of the image of Islam leading people to show enmity to Islam and to attack it. As a result of this, the upright bearers of the religion have deemed it necessary to prove that Islam is not responsible for these crimes. In doing so, they confirm the statement of the Prophet in the sound hadith: "This knowledge will be carried in every generation by the upright. They repel from it the distortions of the over-zealous, the forgeries of the fabricators, and the misinterpretations of the ignorant."

This conference comes in the wake of attempts by extremists to seize the noble title of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah and to apply it exclusively to themselves while excluding its true adherents from it. The conference will be, with God's permission, a blessed turning point in the effort to correct this severe and dangerous deviance and to clarify the concept of Ahl al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah. This will be achieved through reviving its authentic scholastic methodology which the great learning institutions of the Muslim world have

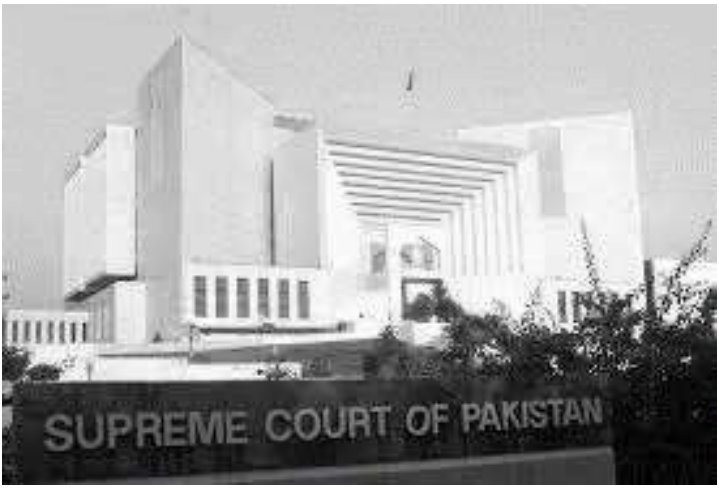
adopted. It represents a safety valve by which takfir and extremism may be dismantled. It will also be achieved by sending messages of safety, peace and mercy to the whole of creation, so that our lands become once again, by God's permission, places of light and guidance.

مؤسسة طابة
Tabah Foundation
www.tabahfoundation.org

4.29 THE RULING OF JUDGE ASIF SAEED KHAN KHOSA REGARDING THE CASE OF AASIA BIBI (2018)

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم
فاحكم بين الناس بالحق
SUPREME COURT OF PAKISTAN

In his book *The Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of the World* (published by Angelico Press on 01.09.2013) John A. Morrow has referred to and reproduced many covenants entered into by the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) with people of the Christian faith and one of such covenants is called the Covenant of the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) with the Monks of Mount Sinai. It is reported that in or around the year 628 A.D. a delegation from St. Catherine's Monastery, the world's oldest monastery located at the foot of Mount Sinai in Egypt, came to the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him), requested for his protection and he responded by granting them a charter of rights. That charter, also known as The Promise to St. Catherine, was translated from Arabic to English language by Dr. A. Zahoor and Dr. Z. Haq as follows:



“This is a message from Muhammad ibn Abdullah, as a covenant to those who adopt Christianity, near and far, we are with them.

Verily I, the servants, the helpers, and my followers defend them, because Christians are my citizens; and by God! I hold out against anything that displeases them. No compulsion is to be on them. Neither are their judges to be removed from their jobs nor their monks from their monasteries. No one is to destroy a house of their religion, to damage it, or to carry anything from it to the Muslims’ houses. Should anyone take any of these, he would spoil God’s covenant and disobey His Prophet. Verily, they are my allies and have my secure charter against all that they hate.

No one is to force them to travel or to oblige them to fight. The Muslims are to fight for them. If a female Christian is married to a Muslim, it is not to take place without her approval. She is not to be prevented from visiting her church to pray. Their churches are to be respected. They are neither to be prevented from repairing them nor the sacredness of their covenants. No one of the nation (Muslims) is to disobey the covenant till the Last Day (end of the world).”

The promise made was eternal and universal and was not limited to St. Catherine alone. The rights conferred by the charter are inalienable and the Holy Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) had declared that Christians, all of them, were his allies and he equated ill treatment of Christians with violating God's covenant. It is noticeable that the charter imposed no conditions on Christians for enjoying its privileges and it was enough that they were Christians. They were not required to alter their beliefs, they did not have to make any payments and they did not have any obligations. The charter was of rights without any duties and it clearly protected the right to property, freedom of religion, freedom of work, and security of person.

4.30 THE ISLAMABAD DECLARATION: RELIGIOUS FREEDOM WITHOUT RETRIBUTION (2019)

1) Killing of innocent people on pretext of religious belief is against the teachings of Islam. All the religious organizations and religious sects of the country denounced these decrees and extremist belief of some sections of the society.

2) Any religious scholar or cleric will not be allowed to criticize prophets, caliphs of Prophet Mohammad (SAW), Ahl al-Bayt, the Family of the Prophet, and Imam Mahdi. Elements making sacrilegious comments on Ahl al-Bayt will not be considered as representatives of any religious organization and religious sect.

3) Any Islamic sectarian group could not be declared as infidel. Any Muslim or non-Muslim could not be declared as doomed to death extra-judicially. Faithful of all the religions and religious sects have constitutional rights to live in the country as per their cultural and religious norms.

4) A complete ban should be ensured on use of loudspeakers except the call to prayer and Friday sermons. People of any religion and religious sects can arrange their congregations with consent of local administration.

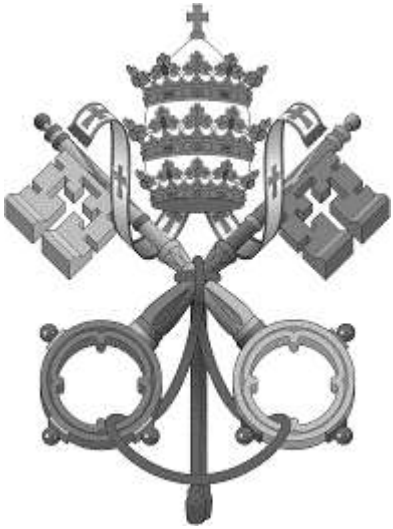
5) A complete ban should be ensured on hateful publications (books, pamphlets, cassettes). A thorough check should be ensured on websites and online links propagating hateful content in the society.

6) Non-Muslims used to live in Pakistan with [the] Muslim populace; therefore, in accordance with the teachings of Islamic Shariah, it is responsibility of the government to ensure protection of life and property of non-Muslims living in Pakistan. Government should strictly handle the elements posing threats to sacred places of non-Muslims residing in Pakistan.

7) Government should ensure across the board implementation on National Action Plan.

[Signed by over 500 Muslim scholars]

4.31 THE DOCUMENT ON HUMAN FRATERNITY



Introduction

Faith leads a believer to see in the other a brother or sister to be supported and loved. Through faith in God, who has created the universe, creatures and all human beings (equal on account of his mercy), believers are called to express this human fraternity by safeguarding creation and the entire universe and supporting all persons, especially the poorest and those most in need.

This transcendental value served as the starting point for several meetings characterized by a friendly and fraternal atmosphere where we shared the joys, sorrows and problems of our contemporary world. We did this by considering scientific and technical progress, therapeutic achievements, the digital era, the mass media and communications. We reflected also on the level of poverty, conflict and suffering of so many brothers and sisters in different parts of the world as a consequence of the arms race, social injustice, corruption, inequality, moral decline, terrorism, discrimination, extremism and many other causes.

From our fraternal and open discussions, and from the meeting that expressed profound hope in a bright future for all human beings, the idea of this Document on Human Fraternity was conceived. It is a text that has been given honest and serious thought to be a joint declaration of good and heartfelt aspirations. It is a document that invites all persons who have faith in God and faith in human fraternity to unite and work together so that it may serve as a guide for future generations to advance a culture of mutual respect in the awareness of the great divine grace that makes all human beings brothers and sisters.

Document

In the name of God who has created all human beings equal in rights, duties and dignity, and who has called them to live together as brothers and sisters, to fill the earth and make known the values of goodness, love and peace;

In the name of innocent human life that God has forbidden to kill, affirming that whoever kills a person is like one who kills the whole of humanity, and that whoever saves a person is like one who saves the whole of humanity;

In the name of the poor, the destitute, the marginalized and those most in need whom God has commanded us to help as a duty required of all persons, especially the wealthy and of means;

In the name of orphans, widows, refugees and those exiled from their homes and their countries; in the name of all victims of wars, persecution and injustice; in the name of the weak, those who live in fear, prisoners of war and those tortured in any part of the world, without distinction;

In the name of peoples who have lost their security, peace, and the possibility of living together, becoming victims of destruction, calamity and war;

In the name of human fraternity that embraces all human beings, unites them and renders them equal;

In the name of this fraternity torn apart by policies of extremism and division, by systems of unrestrained profit or by hateful ideological tendencies that manipulate the actions and the future of men and women;

In the name of freedom, that God has given to all human beings creating them free and distinguishing them by this gift;

In the name of justice and mercy, the foundations of prosperity and the cornerstone of faith;

In the name of all persons of good will present in every part of the world;

In the name of God and of everything stated thus far; Al-Azhar al-Sharif and the Muslims of the East and West, together with the Catholic Church and the Catholics of the East and West, declare the adoption of a culture of dialogue as the path; mutual cooperation as the code of conduct; reciprocal understanding as the method and standard.

We, who believe in God and in the final meeting with Him and His judgment, on the basis of our religious and moral responsibility, and through this Document, call upon ourselves, upon the leaders of the world as well as the architects of international policy and world economy, to work strenuously to spread the culture of tolerance and of living together in peace; to intervene at the earliest opportunity to stop the shedding of innocent blood and bring an end to wars, conflicts, environmental decay and the moral and cultural decline that the world is presently experiencing.

We call upon intellectuals, philosophers, religious figures, artists, media professionals and men and women of culture in every part of the world, to rediscover the values of peace, justice, goodness, beauty, human fraternity and coexistence in order to confirm the importance of these values as anchors of salvation for all, and to promote them everywhere.

This Declaration, setting out from a profound consideration of our contemporary reality, valuing its successes and in solidarity with its suffering, disasters and calamities, believes firmly that among the

most important causes of the crises of the modern world are a desensitized human conscience, a distancing from religious values and a prevailing individualism accompanied by materialistic philosophies that deify the human person and introduce worldly and material values in place of supreme and transcendental principles.

While recognizing the positive steps taken by our modern civilization in the fields of science, technology, medicine, industry and welfare, especially in developed countries, we wish to emphasize that, associated with such historic advancements, great and valued as they are, there exists both a moral deterioration that influences international action and a weakening of spiritual values and responsibility. All this contributes to a general feeling of frustration, isolation and desperation leading many to fall either into a vortex of atheistic, agnostic or religious extremism, or into blind and fanatic extremism, which ultimately encourage forms of dependency and individual or collective self-destruction.

History shows that religious extremism, national extremism and also intolerance have produced in the world, be it in the East or West, what might be referred to as signs of a "third world war being fought piecemeal." In several parts of the world and in many tragic circumstances these signs have begun to be painfully apparent, as in those situations where the precise number of victims, widows and orphans is unknown. We see, in addition, other regions preparing to become theatres of new conflicts, with outbreaks of tension and a build-up of arms and ammunition, and all this in a global context overshadowed by uncertainty, disillusionment, fear of the future, and controlled by narrow-minded economic interests.

We likewise affirm that major political crises, situations of injustice and lack of equitable distribution of natural resources – which only a rich minority benefit from, to the detriment of the majority of the peoples of the earth – have generated, and continue to generate, vast numbers of poor, infirm and diseased persons. This leads to catastrophic crises that various countries have fallen victim to despite their natural resources and the resourcefulness of young people which characterize these nations. In the face of such crises that result in the deaths of millions of children – wasted away from poverty and hunger – there is an unacceptable silence on the international level.

It is clear in this context how the family as the fundamental nucleus of society and humanity is essential in bringing children into the world, raising them, educating them, and providing them with solid moral formation and domestic security. To attack the institution of the family, to regard it with contempt or to doubt its important role, is one of the most threatening evils of our era.

We affirm also the importance of awakening religious awareness and the need to revive this awareness in the hearts of new generations through sound education and an adherence to moral values and upright religious teachings. In this way we can confront tendencies that are individualistic, selfish, conflicting, and address radicalism and blind extremism in all its forms and expressions.

The first and most important aim of religions is to believe in God, to honor Him and to invite all men and women to believe that this universe depends on a God who governs it. He is the Creator who has formed us with His divine wisdom and has granted us the gift of life to protect it. It is a gift that no one has the right to take away, threaten or manipulate to suit oneself. Indeed, everyone must safeguard this gift of life from its beginning up to its natural end. We therefore condemn all those practices that are a threat to life such as genocide, acts of terrorism, forced displacement, human trafficking, abortion and euthanasia. We likewise condemn the policies that promote these practices.

Moreover, we resolutely declare that religions must never incite war, hateful attitudes, hostility and extremism, nor must they incite violence or the shedding of blood. These tragic realities are the consequence of a deviation from religious teachings. They result from a political manipulation of religions and from interpretations made by religious groups who, in the course of history, have taken advantage of the power of religious sentiment in the hearts of men and women in order to make them act in a way that has nothing to do with the truth of religion. This is done for the purpose of achieving objectives that are political, economic, worldly and short-sighted. We thus call upon all concerned to stop using religions to incite hatred, violence, extremism and blind fanaticism, and to refrain from using the name of God to justify acts of murder, exile, terrorism and oppression. We ask this based on our common belief in God who did

not create men and women to be killed or to fight one another, nor to be tortured or humiliated in their lives and circumstances. God, the Almighty, has no need to be defended by anyone and does not want His name to be used to terrorize people.

This Document, in accordance with previous International Documents that have emphasized the importance of the role of religions in the construction of world peace, upholds the following:

The firm conviction that authentic teachings of religions invite us to remain rooted in the values of peace; to defend the values of mutual understanding, human fraternity and harmonious coexistence; to re-establish wisdom, justice and love; and to reawaken religious awareness among young people so that future generations may be protected from the realm of materialistic thinking and from dangerous policies of unbridled greed and indifference that are based on the law of force and not on the force of law;

Freedom is a right of every person: each individual enjoys the freedom of belief, thought, expression and action. The pluralism and the diversity of religions, color, sex, race and language are willed by God in His wisdom, through which He created human beings. This divine wisdom is the source from which the right to freedom of belief and the freedom to be different derives. Therefore, the fact that people are forced to adhere to a certain religion or culture must be rejected, as too the imposition of a cultural way of life that others do not accept;

Justice based on mercy is the path to follow in order to achieve a dignified life to which every human being has a right;

Dialogue, understanding and the widespread promotion of a culture of tolerance, acceptance of others and of living together peacefully would contribute significantly to reducing many economic, social, political and environmental problems that weigh so heavily on a large part of humanity;

Dialogue among believers means coming together in the vast space of spiritual, human and shared social values and, from here, transmitting the highest moral virtues that religions aim for. It also means avoiding unproductive discussions;

The protection of places of worship – synagogues, churches and mosques – is a duty guaranteed by religions, human values, laws and international agreements. Every attempt to attack places of worship or threaten them by violent assaults, bombings or destruction, is a deviation from the teachings of religions as well as a clear violation of international law;

Terrorism is deplorable and threatens the security of people, be they in the East or the West, the North or the South, and disseminates panic, terror and pessimism, but this is not due to religion, even when terrorists instrumentalize it. It is due, rather, to an accumulation of incorrect interpretations of religious texts and to policies linked to hunger, poverty, injustice, oppression and pride. This is why it is so necessary to stop supporting terrorist movements fueled by financing, the provision of weapons and strategy, and by attempts to justify these movements even using the media. All these must be regarded as international crimes that threaten security and world peace. Such terrorism must be condemned in all its forms and expressions;

The concept of citizenship is based on the equality of rights and duties, under which all enjoy justice. It is therefore crucial to establish in our societies the concept of full citizenship and reject the discriminatory use of the term minorities which engenders feelings of isolation and inferiority. Its misuse paves the way for hostility and discord; it undoes any successes and takes away the religious and civil rights of some citizens who are thus discriminated against;

Good relations between East and West are indisputably necessary for both. They must not be neglected, so that each can be enriched by the other's culture through fruitful exchange and dialogue. The West can discover in the East remedies for those spiritual and religious maladies that are caused by a prevailing materialism. And the East can find in the West many elements that can help free it from weakness, division, conflict and scientific, technical and cultural decline. It is important to pay attention to religious, cultural and historical differences that are a vital component in shaping the character, culture and civilization of the East. It is likewise important to reinforce the bond of fundamental human rights in order to help ensure a dignified life for all the men and women of East and West, avoiding the politics of double standards;

It is an essential requirement to recognize the right of women to education and employment, and to recognize their freedom to exercise their own political rights. Moreover, efforts must be made to free women from historical and social conditioning that runs contrary to the principles of their faith and dignity. It is also necessary to protect women from sexual exploitation and from being treated as merchandise or objects of pleasure or financial gain. Accordingly, an end must be brought to all those inhuman and vulgar practices that denigrate the dignity of women. Efforts must be made to modify those laws that prevent women from fully enjoying their rights;

The protection of the fundamental rights of children to grow up in a family environment, to receive nutrition, education and support, are duties of the family and society. Such duties must be guaranteed and protected so that they are not overlooked or denied to any child in any part of the world. All those practices that violate the dignity and rights of children must be denounced. It is equally important to be vigilant against the dangers that they are exposed to, particularly in the digital world, and to consider as a crime the trafficking of their innocence and all violations of their youth;

The protection of the rights of the elderly, the weak, the disabled, and the oppressed is a religious and social obligation that must be guaranteed and defended through strict legislation and the implementation of the relevant international agreements.

To this end, by mutual cooperation, the Catholic Church and Al-Azhar announce and pledge to convey this Document to authorities, influential leaders, persons of religion all over the world, appropriate regional and international organizations, organizations within civil society, religious institutions and leading thinkers. They further pledge to make known the principles contained in this Declaration at all regional and international levels, while requesting that these principles be translated into policies, decisions, legislative texts, courses of study and materials to be circulated.

Al-Azhar and the Catholic Church ask that this Document become the object of research and reflection in all schools, universities and institutes of formation, thus helping to educate new generations to bring goodness and peace to others, and to be defenders everywhere

of the rights of the oppressed and of the least of our brothers and sisters.

In conclusion, our aspiration is that:

this Declaration may constitute an invitation to reconciliation and fraternity among all believers, indeed among believers and non-believers, and among all people of good will;

this Declaration may be an appeal to every upright conscience that rejects deplorable violence and blind extremism; an appeal to those who cherish the values of tolerance and fraternity that are promoted and encouraged by religions;

this Declaration may be a witness to the greatness of faith in God that unites divided hearts and elevates the human soul;

this Declaration may be a sign of the closeness between East and West, between North and South, and between all who believe that God has created us to understand one another, cooperate with one another and live as brothers and sisters who love one another.

This is what we hope and seek to achieve with the aim of finding a universal peace that all can enjoy in this life.

4.32 FRATERNITY OF KNOWLEDGE (2019)

The *Document for Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together*, signed by the Pope of the Catholic Church, Francesco, and by shaykh Ahmed al-Tayyeb, imam of the Al-Azhar mosque, along with the journey of the Pope to the United Arab Emirates, is an unprecedented event, at an institutional level, in the history of relations between Christians and Muslims.

The general impression is that a new phase is opening, under many aspects, with regards to the relations between our two religions. This phase seems to be moving toward the recognition of the legitimacy, and providence, of the diversity of the Revelations, of theologies, of religions, of languages, and of religious communities. Diversities are no longer being seen as a call to conquest or proselytism, or as an excuse for a mere facade of tolerance, but rather recognized as an opportunity for the exercise and practice of fraternity that represents "a vocation contained in God's plan of creation," as affirmed in the Document itself.

"God is at the origin of the one human family," stated the Pope on this occasion, and out of respect for religious plurality a "recognition of the other" is necessary, a recognition that is "neither forced uniformity nor a conciliatory syncretism"; but one based on the need to "purify the heart from turning in on itself," a warning against placing one's group against or in the place of another. It is significant that all of this is occurring exactly 800 years from the journey of Saint Francis of Assisi to Egypt and his meeting with the Ayyubid Sultan al-Malik al-Kamil. It is auspicious that the events of 1986 in Assisi—the common prayer for Peace— and of 2019 in Abu Dhabi—the convergence over the value of human fraternity—can be taken as two cornerstones that from now on cannot be avoided in interreligious dialogue in general, and especially Islamo-Christian dialogue.

An important verse of the Qur'anic Revelation, that guides Muslims in the relations between Revelations and believers, affirms:

> *And unto thee have We revealed the Scripture with the truth, confirming whatever Scripture was before it, and a watcher over it. So judge between them by that which Allah hath revealed, and follow not their desires away from the truth which hath come unto thee. For each We have appointed a divine law and a traced-out way. Had Allah willed He could have made you one community. But that He may try you by that which He hath given you (He hath made you as ye are). So vie one with another in good works. Unto Allah ye will all return, and He will then inform you of that wherein ye differ. (5:48)*

This Qur'anic verse seems to almost echo the content of the letter that Pope Gregory VII addressed in 1074 to the Hammadi Emir an-Nasir, who reigned over Bejaïa, in modern day Algeria:

> *Almighty God, who wills all men be saved and none to perish, approves nothing in us more fully than that, after his love for God, a man should love his fellow men and that what he would not have done to himself he would do to no one else. Such charity as this, we and you owe to our own more particularly than to other peoples; for we believe and confess to one God, albeit in different ways, and we daily praise and revere him as the Creator and Governor of this world.*

Beyond the doctrinal foundations, we also understand the important role of more recent documents and declarations that constitute the history of Islamo-Christian dialogue over the past sixty years, documents that led to the Abu Dhabi meeting and Document for Human Fraternity. Above all, the fundamental documents of the Second Vatican Council, concluded in 1965, and in particular *Nostra Aetate*, marked a crucial moment of opening towards dialogue with other religions, towards brotherhood between faiths and the abandonment of missionarism understood as authoritarian and aggressive proselytism. In 1985, Pope John Paul II, on the occasion of a meeting with the youth of Casablanca, in Morocco, declared with regard to our differences that "it is a Mystery about which one day God will enlighten us, I am sure"; this recognition of the providential

mystery of religious differences, was the inspiration for the meeting in Assisi the following year, where religious leaders from across the world came together to pray for peace. Thereafter the idea began to emerge that the Christian concept of God, in its deepest essence, is not fundamentally contrary to the Islamic one, despite its presentation in a formally different way. The truth remains that, despite these differences, the successors of Abraham still turn to the one God, under whom they are united, whilst necessarily remaining distinct from one another on the formal level. On the other hand, the first years of the 2000s were perhaps more complex. This included Pope Benedict XVI's declarations in his speech in Regensburg in 2006, that eventually brought 138 Muslim scholars to write and propose the *A Common Word Document*, after which the Catholic-Muslim Forum was established and began to consider the twofold commandment of love of God and love of the other as a common word that can bring light to relations between Christian and Muslim believers.

The *Document for Human Fraternity for World Peace and Living Together* is part of this lineage and is the second official document that Pope Francis has signed with another religious leader, the first being the declaration signed in Cuba in 2016 with Patriarch Kirill of the Christian Orthodox Church of Russia. There have already been various positive comments and expressions of approval for the Abu Dhabi event and for the Document that was read and signed on that occasion; however, there have also been objections from the usual literalists and exclusivists that are unfortunately present on both sides. Among the positive and constructive responses, we cite as example the comment made by the network of European Muslim scholars, EuLeMa, and in the Catholic environment, the interesting comment that appeared on the Catholic review *Aleteia*. We would like to second these statements, taking them as an occasion to make some reflections on the themes put forth in the Document.

Interreligious dialogue is recommended by the Qur'an with the goal of putting it into practice "in the best of ways," and nowadays it is of vital importance for at least three reasons. First of all, the modern world emerged not merely at the margins of religious values, but actually in opposition to religion as such. It is therefore important to change modernity's view of the religions. Second, the religions face

a common challenge — nothing less than the end of human civilization as we have known it. Believers must contribute to the common search for a new civilization. Third, our time is dominated by injustice, oppression, xenophobia, the decline of democracy throughout the world, and the growth of every sort of ideological extremism. These forces can only be fought on the grounds of solidarity—not only between religions, but between all human communities.

From our point of view there are three types of dialogue between faiths: one of convenience, one of reality, and one of principle. The dialogue of convenience aims to avoid all thorny issues, it is a false, vague, horizontal approach, one that abolishes traditional doctrines, sacred symbols and ways of grace; in order to reconcile two adversaries it suffocates them both; this is certainly the quickest way to achieve a false peace that has been substituted for truth. Inspired by a philosophical indifference, or by a relativist universalism, the characteristic of this dialogue is the dissolving of values. This is a false dialogue because instead of recognizing and supporting religions and their sacred foundations, it ends up providing a cheap conception of human rights, above all promoting, in the place of true spirituality, the "right to indifference."

For persons who are sensitive to spirituality and contemplation, to support one another in exclusively material or sentimental terms is neither true support nor true fraternity. To those engaged in this type of dialogue, the following question is addressed: are we sure that we truly know the nature of the Good we desire, before seeking it for ourselves and then imposing it on others? The *Document for Human Fraternity* certainly does not propose this type of dialogue.

A second type of dialogue we might call "de facto" or "reality based": this consists of an understanding of religious people and the institutions that represent them on the basis of their common acceptance of certain moral values and metaphysical concepts, and in the understanding that they are faced with the common threat of secularization. This is the type of interreligious dialogue upon which the Document mainly focuses: "Dialogue among believers means coming together in the vast space of spiritual, human and shared

social values and, from here, transmitting the highest moral virtues that religions aim for."

Justice, goodness, beauty, fraternity and peace on the social level are "anchors of salvation" for all, but they can certainly not be substituted for the salvation of the soul, just as the means are not a substitute for the end. It is a matter of creating conditions for a shared and necessary peace such as Dante strove for, so that it is possible for all to live a life oriented to the search for God, the highest and last objective that mankind can aspire to. This type of dialogue constitutes a necessary step towards the third type of dialogue, which we see as the most desirable of all.

This last type of dialogue can be called the one of "principle," or "dialogue at the summit": it consists in recognizing the mode of Knowledge that discovers the one Truth above the veil of multiple forms. Saint Basil, commenting on the beginning of the Gospel of Saint John, exclaimed, "Don't forget 'In the Beginning'! The culmination of the Principle cannot be understood while that which is outside of the Principle cannot be found." To reach this objective, the one we consider to be of the greatest worth, there appears to be a long way to go.

Secondly, in addition to Knowledge it is important to consider Fraternity, which provides the title to for this document and which should be understood, by both believers and humanity in general, as an ontological value to remember, rediscover, and practice. Regarding this, we wish to draw attention to some teachings of the Islamic Tradition regarding fraternity in its two fundamental aspects. First of all, men are brothers because they ontologically attest to the divine authority, as the Qur'an affirms:

> *And (remember) when thy Lord brought forth from the Children of Adam, from their reins, their seed, and made them testify of themselves, (saying): Am I not your Lord? They said: Yea, verily. We testify. (That was) lest ye should say at the Day of Resurrection: Lo! of this we were unaware. Also, fraternity is expressed at different levels depending on the spiritual family to which one belongs. (7:172)*

A tradition of Muhammad the Prophet of Islam says: "The prophets are paternal brothers, their mothers are different."

The believers and the communities that connect them to their founding Prophets are therefore called upon to live this fraternity, a fraternity that is not only human, but above all prophetic, in terms of the common spiritual paternity and generation that brings believing communities together and renders them brothers. This second level of fraternity is like a specification of the first: there are various spiritual families that make up humanity, connected to one another through a relationship of fraternity, both between the components of each specific community and between the different communities themselves. These connections operate on distinct planes, yet all of them descend from a common and single origin. These two different levels of fraternity should be distinguished and thereby made to harmonize with one another without confusion.

This fraternity, of precious value for all religions, needs to be achieved at different levels. The Document develops some of the most important of these levels — namely, the dignity of human life (men and women, children and elders), family, justice based on mercy, freedom of the person, freedom of religion, the protection of sacred spaces and spaces of worship, condemnation of pseudo-religious fundamentalism, the culture of dialogue and tolerance, dignified citizenship, the protection and recognition of minorities, the relations and understanding between East and West.

The convergence between East and West—the "embrace" as defined in the Document— based on the "culture of dialogue" and on "reciprocal understanding" represents, in the eschatological times in which we live, a true necessity and a sign of the Mercy of God. In asserting that "The West can discover in the East remedies for those spiritual and religious maladies that are caused by a prevailing materialism" the Document demonstrates great foresight with regards to the potential of interreligious dialogue. The form of dialogue that it proposes is not that of good intentions, but rather the dialogue of faith in God, a dialogue reflecting the recognition of metaphysical principles, a dialogue that, without doctrinal compromises, allows the transparency of the One Divine Reality to emerge.

This kind of dialogue allows men and women of the different Revelations given them by God to come together peacefully and recognize one another in their common origin. What comes to mind are the words of Shaykh Abd al-Wahid Pallavicini, representative of Islam at the meeting promoted by Pope John Paul II in Assisi in 1986:

> *This will be the true ecumenism at the summit, the only one that can lead towards true peace, that peace that does not derive only from justice and is not one that occurs at all costs, but is founded on a superior justice that can come only from the mutual recognition of the spiritual validity of our different faiths, of that Abrahamic Tradition of which we are all part.*

The Document repeatedly affirms the centrality of faith:

> *We affirm also the importance of awakening religious awareness and the need to revive this awareness in the hearts of new generations […]. The first and most important aim of religions is to believe in God, to honor Him and to invite all men and women to believe that this universe depends on a God who governs it. He is the Creator who has formed us with His divine wisdom and has granted us the gift of life to protect it.*

In this case, the Document takes into consideration the danger of "a desensitized human conscience, a distancing from religious values," as well as that of "prevailing individualism accompanied by materialistic philosophies that deify the human person and introduce worldly and material values in place of supreme and transcendental principles." Faith, however, is not complete if it does not reflect a lived religious practice that transforms hearts. If it is true that there should not be any coercion in religion, it is also true that, if the rites and their protection are overlooked, there is a secularization of religion itself.

The protection of religious minorities and places of worship becomes a necessary consequence of the reciprocal support of the adoration of the one God: "The protection of places of worship – synagogues,

churches and mosques – is a duty guaranteed by religions, human values, laws and international agreements." Spiritual centers, that recall the primordial spiritual center, represent the terrestrial Jerusalem from which to elevate oneself in order to reach the celestial Jerusalem, according to the words of Christ: "The Peace that I give you is not that of this world."

The text of one of the covenants sanctioned by the Prophet Muhammad and the Christians states:

> *If the Christians approach you seeking the help and assistance of the Muslims in order to repair their churches and their convents, or to arrange matters pertaining to their affairs and religion, these [Muslims] must help and support them. However, they must not do so with the aim of receiving any reward or debt. On the contrary, they should do so to restore that religion, out of faithfulness to the pact of the Messenger of Allah, by pure donation, and as a meritorious act before Allah and His Messenger.*

The path to be walked together is that of "justice based on mercy." And by "based on mercy" we do not mean a lax justice, permissive and without rules, but rather a way to exorcise the inquisitional formalism and the obsessive concentration on the differences that have to be put forward, that can distract from the only truly fundamental concentration—the concentration on God.

Beyond our generally positive reaction to the Document, it also seems necessary to make some cautious reflections, in the form of a warning with regards to a latent danger —one that does not place blame anywhere except upon ignorance—that the values mentioned by the Document, and recalled in this comment, might be interpreted or practiced in a partial or excessive way, outside the field for which they were designed by the Creator. Fraternity, mercy and spirituality should not be exclusively understood or practiced in a sentimental and emotional way. This is a latent risk that is always present when one enthusiastically undertakes the path of knowledge and love. It is not a matter of denigrating or eliminating good feelings or healthy emotions, simply of not forgetting their fundamental aim: to melt the

hardness of the heart before the revelation of the more elevated and profound levels of the unity in God.

Let us return for a moment to the main theme of the Document—fraternity. It is necessary to understand clearly what is meant by this word in order to avoid misunderstandings or manipulations. Fraternity in diversity is the cornerstone of the text, but there is a danger that this concept might be interpreted in too sociological or psychological a sense. In this case we would be left with a solely human, "too human" interpretation of religious fraternity, according to which man would be adored as he is, worshipped instead of God, despite the continued use of the word "God" as a mere formality, a word no longer referring to a Reality that we aspire to know. A respect for differences should not become an excuse for the adoration of the particular and the phenomenal in and of itself, where contingency replaces the Eternal. On the other hand, understanding fraternity in a vague and general sense, in the absence of sound theological principles, would lead to an insipid indifference. The "general" meaning of "human fraternity" and the "specific" theological meaning should not be confused or allowed to cancel each other out: loss of the specific leads to empty indifference, while loss of the general leads to idolatry of the most insignificant phenomena.

In saying this, we intend to express our disagreement with some of the critiques leveled at the Document on the question of fraternity, critiques made by both Muslims and Christians. According to them, true fraternity can only exist between members of the same religious community, whereas the fraternity between Muslims and Christians has no theological foundation. It is, however, fundamental to remember that the "general" fraternity between human beings is based on a teaching inherent in both the Muslim and the Christian Revelations; it is this mode of fraternity that in no way annuls specific fraternity but is rather a consequence of it. To be "brothers in Christ" or "companions to the Prophet" does not imply that there must be an hostility between brothers and companions; in fact, there could be an even greater loyalty to our respective spiritual Teachers if the richness of the forms they brought could be understood as a way to vie with each other in good deeds. In this way we might come to a deeper understanding of the Absolute, Metaphysical, and Single Truth based

on the recognition of a shared metaphysical perspective and the inner tension that is proper to the traditional forms through which this Truth manifests, a tension that does not posit cultural relativism but, rather, a mysterious and fully blessed spiritual participation by every believer in their specific "religious grammar" through which the Will and the Mercy of God transmits Its intelligible signs in a sacred communication.

Such a mystery becomes even more priceless when every believer is able to respect, even in the brother of another culture and religion, the full dignity of a faith in its different and providential "grammar" and to recognize in this "pluralism" the signs of an extraordinary Will and Mercy of the One God, thus abandoning all claims to an apologetic exclusivism and rejecting the arrogant denial of another God-revealed faith. In fact, it is not a matter of understanding religious pluralism as the legitimation of the "confusion of tongues" that supervened after the presumptuousness of the tower of Babel, but, rather, of respecting the differences between the languages, symbols, rites, doctrines and dogmas and at the same time recognizing a superior language shared among believers, which might form the basis for a deeper respect and collaboration between brothers in contemplating the infinite articulations and aspects of the divine expression. A greater understanding of this superior language might lead to dialogue aimed at better understanding His Monologue, and to a re-establishment of the purity of the Intellect in the simplicity of human life and the complexity of human history.

It is equally crucial not to reject objectivity, depth, discernment, and even knowledge itself in the name of fraternity, either now, at the beginning of this great fraternal dialogue, or in any future stages of it. Fraternity does not mean renouncing the good and the true (that would be to compromise Principle), but rather to learn how to put all things, including humanity, in their proper places. In order to recognize the dynamic by which everything integrates harmoniously in Unity without making Unity the product of personal imagination, it is fundamental to know how to disregard biased and conditioned thinking (whether apologetic, theological, or cultural) with regards to doctrines and symbols, as well as when considering history and contemporary events, whether pleasant or unpleasant.

Following these brief critical reflections that we felt it necessary to share given the historical importance of the meeting between the Catholic Pope and the Imam of al-Azhar, and the Document which resulted, we wish to express our great sense of satisfaction at the achievement this occasion represents, and we hope that this will be a starting point (and also a point of no return) challenging us to truly dedicate ourselves, as men, as brothers, and as religious people, to the discovery and practice of these treasures of spiritual and metaphysical knowledge that the religious Traditions continue to hold in trust.

We pray that the Document for Human Fraternity will be of substantive aid in reinforcing unity both inside each religious community and in the intellectual exchange between them, in a fruitful in a fruitful engagement of differing positions. We hope that, through it, the Islamic community worldwide may find a renewed impulse and inspiration toward internal dialogue, thereby allowing its natural "unity in diversity" once again to become a communally shared value. The Islamic tradition is rich in diversity, including different legal and theological schools, and it is important that an inviting and brotherly space be provided for all groups to join in dialogue and fraternity. Within Islam, this includes outreach and understanding of both Sunni Islam and of Shi'a Islam, which has historically been underrepresented but has much to offer global religious dialogue. A call for human fraternity and sectarian de-escalation is especially important in a context of increased sectarian violence and discrimination across the world including within the global Muslim community. We pray that practices such as excommunicatory violence (*takfirism*), are brought to an end, and that inclusive Muslim unity be forged while building on significant prior achievements such as the Amman Message that established intra-religious acceptance across various Muslim schools. From this common effort toward a renewed circulation of ideas and insights from within the Islamic world, we hope that concrete actions may arise, either as continuations of past efforts or as new initiatives, in order to increase the number of religious representatives directly engaged and widen the scope of their influence.

As this new step in the Islamo-Christian dialogue matures, it will be equally important to accept, together with the points we hold in

common, those necessary asymmetries that may emerge from both a formal and a doctrinal point of view, so that each may learn to accept the theological expressions of the other's religion without judging them on the basis of their own, insofar as we respect each others' specific jurisdictions. We need to cultivate mutual respect between our different communities on the basis of our common proclamation that God as One, helping each other to remember that our central aim is to honor the name of the Lord, especially in the difficult times that our humanity is now passing through.

It is for the attainment of this goal, as interreligious relations and Islamo-Christian dialogue continues, that we find it important and opportune to give wider expression to certain actors who could truly play a prominent role—namely, the contemplative orders, that is to say the Christian monastic orders and the Sufi orders of Islam, those who are custodians and cultivators, in different forms and at different levels, of the contemplation of God, since it is from this perspective that they call one another "brothers." It is no accident that the meeting between Saint Francis and the Sultan, an exam

It is no accident that the meeting between Saint Francis and the Sultan, an example that still has a positive impact in the East and West today, occurred at a time in which these religious orders emerged, blossomed, and renewed themselves. On the one side, the Franciscans (1209), the Dominicans (1216) and the Hermits of Saint Augustine and the Carmelites, and on the other side the Qadiriyya, the Rifa'iyya, the Suhrawardiyya, and shortly after, the Shadhiliyya. What true understanding can there be at the summit if there is not a common orientation towards the Eternal, a will to elevate ourselves from the temporal contingencies towards the Face of God? In the past, the contemplative orders were fundamental bastions of orthodoxy and spirituality, both in Christianity (Catholic and Orthodox) and in Islam (Sunni and Shi'a), and nothing prohibits them from carrying out this role once again, serving also as mediators between both the believers and religious of our two faiths, for a true spiritual understanding—strictly avoiding any shadow of syncretism—whilst waiting for the eschatological denouement to our human drama, whose final nature and outcome lies in the mystery of the Divine Will.

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Yusuf Casewit, ISESCO, USA
Mohd Hasbi Abu Bakar, ISESCO, Singapore
Muhammad Sammak, KAICIID, Lebanon
Mustafa Ceric, EULEMA, Bosnia
Hamza Yusuf Hanson, Forum for Peace in Muslim Societies, UAE
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Ibrahim Mogra, ECRL, United Kingdom
Sayed Ali Abbas Razawi, Ahlul Bayt Society, Scotland
Mohammad Hasbi bin Hassan, PERGAS, Singapore
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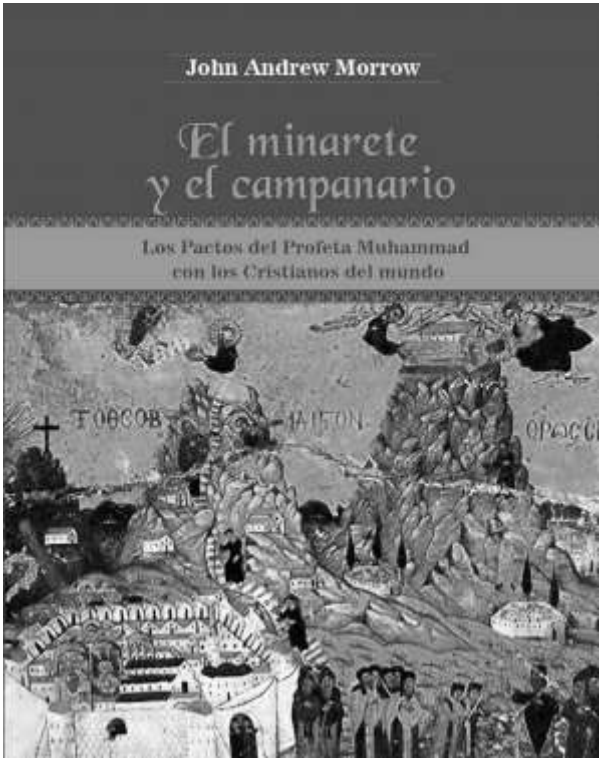

John Andrew Morrow
El minarete
y el campanario
Los Pactos del Profeta Muhammad
con los Cristianos del mundo

CONCLUSIONS

Why, one wonders, would a person be required to write such a book? Surely, the Koran and the Sunnah or Example of the Prophet should suffice. In theory, yes, but in practice, no. The Messenger of God warned his Companions in the seventh century that Islam would be corrupted, deformed, mutilated, and mangled and that it would eventually become unrecognizable to him.

The Messenger of God foretold that the Muslim Community would be vast like the sea but that the true believers would be like the froth at its surface. He foretold that the religious scholars would become the worst of all people. He foretold that Korans would be written in gold but there would be no Koran in the hearts of the Muslims. He foretold that the Muslims would become like their enemies, imitating them in all their evil ways. He foretold that the true believers would appear as aliens to the people and he sent his salutation to these strangers.

The Messenger of God warned his Companions that Islam would be attacked both internally and externally. Consequently, he foretold that leaders and scholars would be required to reform, renew, and revive the religion of Islam. They would need to filter and purify the teachings of the Koran, the sayings of the Prophet, and the man-made laws of the Shariah from un-Islamic cultural elements. Clearly, the time would come that Islam would need, not a reformation, as in Protestant Christianity, but rather a revolution, a revival, an enlightenment, and a renaissance, all in the name not of the blind imitation of Western models, but rather of the restoration of the traditional foundations of the faith.

The Prophets and Messenger of God, along with the saints and scholars who followed their example, have always been viewed as a threat to those vested with political and economic power. Consequently, they fought, persecuted, and killed the prophets of God and their faithful followers. God is opposed by the Devil. Belief is opposed by disbelief. Justice is opposed by injustice. Right is opposed by wrong. Such is the epic battle of universal proportions in which we are engaged.

Since Islam promotes faith, morals, and ethics, the people who promote and profit from immorality are bound to oppose it. Since Islam promotes socio-economic and political justice, and calls for true consultative democracy, the secret rulers of the world, the 1% of billionaire oligarchs, who control governments from behind the scenes, are compelled to fight it directly and indirectly.

The enemies of Islam attack it directly by inciting Islamophobia and indirectly by supporting Islamist terrorists, thereby setting up an unconscious contradiction to shellshock the people, to confuse them, and to render them comatose. Nor should these enemies be simply identified with Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism or any other religion, since one of their most common and successful strategies has been to incite conflict between different religions to hide their own agenda.

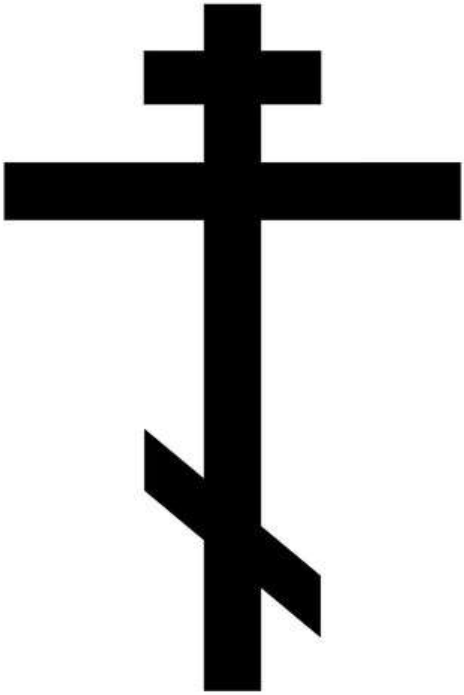
The central goal of these enemies of God is to destroy Islam and Muslim self-determination by any means necessary. Be that as it may, it should never be forgotten that this plot to destroy Islam forms part of a larger agenda to destroy all the God-given religions that is driven by the master plan of the globalist elites.

Islam has been under attack since the Prophet Muhammad came down the Mountain of Light in the seventh century. Even before the Messenger of God passed away, his enemies, the hypocrites among his Companions, by themselves or in alliance with foreign political forces, plotted to seize the reins of power. These were the same hypocrites and enemies who had held power prior to the rise of Islam, who had attempted on numerous occasions to assassinate the Prophet Muhammad, and who fought his followers violently. Since they could not defeat him militarily and recognized the power of faith that he had unleashed, they decided to "Islamize" themselves and patiently await the time and moment to take power and exterminate Islam. Those winds of yesterday have brought us the storms of today. The Taliban, al-Qaedah, ISIS, and other terrorist groups are almost direct descendants of those early hypocrites who disguised themselves as Muslims.

Due to the shortcomings of certain Muslims, and the treacherous actions of certain hypocrites, the Muhammadan socio-political, economic, ethical, and spiritual model, known variously as the Caliphate, Imamate, and Sultanate, was converted into monarchies, dynasties, and empires. Islam became the anti-thesis of Islam. Islam became the enemy of itself -- a condition that outside enemies have often been quick to take advantage of. Certain self-professed Muslims would wittingly or unwittingly become the greatest enemies of Muslims. They have transformed Islam from the religion of God to the religion of Satan. They Satanized Islam. But God, of course, is the Best of Planners. His enemies may plot, plan, and scheme, but He is the Best of Plotters.

The purpose of this book is clear. To present Islam as it really was, as it really is, and as it should most certainly be, and not as it is falsely presented by its enemies, including both its overt enemies and its covert enemies, those who openly attack from the outside, and those who surreptitiously attack from the inside, namely, those who pretend to be Muslims when they are really the Sons of Satan. In these days of darkness, we must sometimes fight "Islamism" in order to defend Islam. Islam is not the religion of hatred, violence, misogyny, injustice, oppression, cruelty, perversion, exploitation, bigotry, intolerance, bloodshed, murder, and terrorism as it is made out to be by Islamophobes and Islamists. Islam is its very opposite.

Since God is Beautiful and loves Beauty, since God is Just and loves Justice, and since God is Merciful and loves Mercy, the goal of this book is to bring the beauty, justice, and mercy back into Islam – or rather to unveil the beauty, justice and mercy that have always been there. The world, Muslim and non-Muslim, has simply been hoodwinked and swindled. They have succumbed to a slight of hand. They have been sold a fraud as opposed to the genuine article. The Islam of God and His Messenger, true civilizational Islam, the Islam of all our great achievements, physical, social, and intellectual, throughout the centuries, is the Islam of the Covenants of the Prophet, which have now returned from their exile. Let us rise to the occasion.



AFTERWORD:

THE ROLE OF THE PROPHETIC COVENANTS IN ILLUMINATING THE KORAN AND PURIFYING THE *HADITH*

The religion of Islam is, as it were, a hidden religion. I do not mean this strictly in the Shia sense, as referring to the Hidden Imam; it's simply that much of the true meaning and significance of the Islamic revelation, as the author points out, was hidden and obscured very early in its history, soon after the death of the Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him.

Why are treasures hidden? Most often they are hidden for safekeeping. Thieves hide their stolen goods, but rightful owners also hide their possessions to protect them from thieves. And, as is now beginning to become apparent, Allah sometimes allows thieves to hide things of value so as to protect them from even greater thieves, and to preserve them until such time as their true owners are ready to take possession of them again. In the words of the Holy Koran (9:30):

> And when those who disbelieve plot against you (O Muhammad) to fatally wound you, or to kill you or to drive you out: they plot, but Allah (also) plots—and Allah is the best of plotters.

It is only now, when the signs of the Hour are making their appearance, one by one, on the stage of history, that certain elements of the true Islam of the Prophet are being unearthed by true scholars working under the hand of Allah—whose ink, according to the *hadith*, is as precious as the blood of the martyrs. Or even more so. These include the Covenants or Peace Treaties of the Prophet, which had fallen so far into obscurity that they had almost been forgotten by the *ummah*, though before the fall of the Ottoman Empire in the 1920's they had been known not only to virtually every Muslim scholar but to many ordinary believers, and had even formed the basis of Ottoman policy toward religious minorities. It has been the mission of the author of the present book to dig these precious documents out from the earth of forgetfulness that had obscured them and return them to

their rightful place among the foundational documents of Islam. And the case could be made that these documents are of even more crucial relevance to our own time, a time when all the God-sent religious are being attacked from without and corrupted from within, than they were to earlier and less apocalyptic ages.

As the reader has already seen, the author makes no bones about openly declaring that much that is unworthy of the sublime character of the Prophet Muhammad has crept, or been thrust, into the body of the *ahadith*. The dire consequences of this subversion for the religion of Islam have become glaringly apparent in our own time, when the crimes of the mad dogs of Da'esh and similar bands of the mis-educated and the gullible—their leadership drawn from the pool of international mercenaries available to the highest bidder, thus making these organizations classic examples of flocks of sheep led to the slaughter by cadres of wolves to whom martyrdom has no meaning—been justified by appeal to the *hadith* themselves, leading the enemies of Islam to characterize it not as a religion sent by God but as nothing better than a criminal conspiracy. Perhaps *al-Dajjal* has finally emerged in our time, in this age of the tribulation, the *fitan*; be that as it may, it is certain that the Deceiver has been secretly at work from the beginning. And while Satan was unable to corrupt the Koran, the Word of God, he was, however, able to corrupt the Hadith, which is the Word of Man. Let us pray that God give us, Muhammad's weak and heedless successors, the light to cast out the *satanic hadith*.

Simply stated, I propose that any *hadith* that clearly contradicts the sense of the Holy Koran, as illuminated by the Constitution of Medina and the authenticated Covenants of the Prophet, be labeled as either uncertain or spurious, regardless of its *isnad.* Such a purification of the *hadith* collections may in fact have been made possible for the first time by the work of Dr. John Andrew Morrow and his colleagues, who have substantially authenticated the Prophetic Covenants as directly authored by Muhammad himself (except for a few counterfeits that appear to have crept in), and done so not only according to the canons of traditional Muslim scholarship but equally in line with strict criteria of western textual and historical criticism. In view of the emergence of this new criterion, whatever had seemed uncertain in the Koran itself pertaining to the relations between

Muslims and the Peoples of the Book can now be illuminated by viewing it in light of the clear intent of the Prophet as revealed in his Covenants, which represent not only his textually authenticated wishes but his historically authenticated practice. Once the Koran is understood in light of the Covenants, the *hadith* can be clearly re-evaluated in light of the Koran.

Why not? When all is on the point of being lost, there is little to lose but much to be gained. As the *akhirah* draws daily nearer for all of us, may the light of the Hour shine into our hearts and minds and guide us on the Straight Path—that Hour when

> Every one of you will return to God, and He will inform you regarding the things about which you differed. (5:48)

Charles Upton
Executive Director
The Covenants of the Prophet Foundation

APPENDIX 1

THE REFERENCES FOR THE COVENANT OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD WITH THE MONKS OF MOUNT SINAI

The *Covenant of the Prophet Muhammad with the Monks of Mount Sinai* has been transmitted through many channels over the course of history. It has been confirmed over the centuries by authorities included in this list:

The Prophet Muhammad (d. 632 CE): authentic
The Companions of the Prophet (seventh century CE): authentic
Abu Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthman, and ‘Ali (632-661 CE): authentic
The Monks of Mount Sinai (seventh century CE to the present): authentic
The Jabaliyyah Arabs of the Sinai (seventh century CE to the present): authentic
Honored by Abu Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthman, and ‘Ali (632-661 CE): authentic
Honored by the Ummayads and ‘Abassids (661-750; 750-1258 CE): authentic
Ibn Sa’d cites Treaty of Najran / St. Catherine (d. 845 CE): authentic
Fatimid Decrees (965, 1024, 1109, 1110, 1135, 1154, and 1156 CE): authentic
Fatimid Caliph al-Mu’izz (953-974 CE): authentic
Fatimid Caliph al-’Aziz (975-996 CE): authentic
Fatimid Caliph al-Hakim (996-1021 CE): authentic
Fatimid Caliph al-Ẓahir (1024 CE): authentic
Fatimid Vizier al-Afdal ibn Badr al-Jamali (1094-1121 CE): authentic
al-Hafiz (1134 CE): authentic
Decree of Shirkuh (1169 CE): authentic
Ayyubids Decrees (1195, 1199, 1201/02, and 1210/11 CE): authentic
Mamluk Decrees (1259, 1260, 1272, 1268/69, 1280 and

1516 CE): authentic
Ibn Kathir reportedly paraphrases the complete list of privileges granted to St. Catherine's Monastery (d. 1373 CE): authentic
Treaty of the Sultan of Egypt with the Order of St. John of Jerusalem (1403 CE): authentic
Fatwas: Nearly 2000 Edicts from Five Schools of Jurisprudence (975 CE-1888): authentic
Ottoman Decrees (1519 to 1904): authentic
Jean Thenaud (1512 CE): authentic
Copies of the Covenant (Undated, 1517 CE, 1561 CE, 1683 CE, 1737/38 CE, 1800/01 CE): authentic
Tsernotabey (1517 CE)
Firman of Selim I (1517 CE): authentic
Copies of Achtiname (1517-1858 CE): authentic
Greffin Affagart (1533 CE): authentic
Feridun Bey (d. 1583 CE): authentic
Franciscus Quaresmius (1639): authentic
Balthsar de Monconys (1646-1647): authentic
Nektarios of Sinai (1660): authentic
Grand Vizier Merzifonlu Kara Mustapha Pasha (1663-1666): apocryphal; then authentic
Joannes Caramuel de Lobkowitz (1672): authentic
Henry Stubbe (1632-1676 CE): authentic
M.L.M.D.C. (1697): authentic
Eusèbe Renaudot (1713): authentic
John Gagnier (1732): aprocryphal
Bernard Picard (1736): authentic
Johann Lorenz von Mosheim (1693-1755): apocryphal but authentic in content
Demetrius Cantemir (1734 and 1743): apocryphal according to one Vizier
Richard Pococke (1743): authentic
Thomas Salmon (1744): authentic
J.A. Van Egmont and J. Heyman (1759): authentic
George Psalmanazar (1764 CE): apocryphal or limited to the Sinai Monks
Dom Jean Mabillon (1767): disputed
Jean Michel de Venture de Paradis (1798): authentic

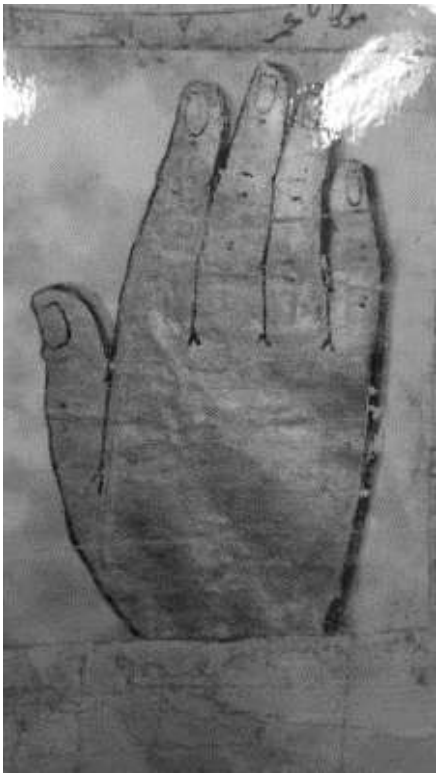
Napoléon Bonaparte (1798): authentic
Jean-Joseph Marcel (1798): authentic
Commission des Sciences et des Arts (1798): authentic
Charles Thomson (1798): authentic
Edward Wells (1809): authentic
J.N. Fazakerley (1811): authentic
John Lewis Burckhardt (1816): apocryphal
Abraham Salamé (1819): authentic
Félix Mengin (1823): authentic
Thomas Clarke (1823): authentic
John Carne (1826): authentic
Abbé Grand and Adrien Egron (1827): authentic
John Gibson Lockhart (1835): authentic
National Geographic Society (1835): authentic
Joseph von Hammer-Purgstall and J.-J. Hellert (1837): authentic
Ministers of Various Evangelical Denominations (1839): authentic
C.B. Houry (1840): authentic
Maria Giuseppe de Géramb (1840): authentic
Léon de Laborde (1841): apocryphal
Pietro della Valle (1843): authentic
A. Oumanetz (1843): authentic
Louis de Tesson (1844): authentic
Père Joguet (1844): authentic
von Tischendorf (1847): apocryphal
Léon Gingras (1847): authentic
Austen Henry Layard (1850): authentic
Odoardo Cusiere (1852): apocryphal
Amable Regnault (1855): authentic in content
Henry Day (1857): authentic
J.G. Pitzipios-Bey (1858): authentic
Joseph Wolff (1861): authentic
Carl Ritter (1865): apocryphal
Antonio Figari Bey (1865): authentic
John Davenport (1869): authentic
Wilfrid Scawen Blunt (1882): apocryphal
Samuel Sullivan Cox (1887): authentic
R. Accademia dei Lini (1888): authentic

Philippe Gelât (1888/1889): authentic
Nawfal Effendi Nawfal (late nineteenth century CE): authentic
Syed Ameer ‘Ali (1891): authentic
R.P. Jullien (1893): authentic (with reservations)
Dean Arthur Stanley (1894): authentic
L’Union islamique / al-Ittihad al-Islami (1898): authentic
Bessarione (1898): authentic
Échos d’Orient (1898): authentic
Anton F. Haddad (1902): authentic
‘Abdullah al-Ma’mun al-Suhrawardy (1904 and 1905): authentic
Sultan ‘Abd al-Hamid II (1904): authentic
Sésostris Sidarouss (1907): authentic
Jurji Zaydan (1907): apocryphal but based on authentic covenants
Louis Cheikho (1909): apocryphal
Na’um Shuqayr (1916): authentic
Bernhard Moritz (1918): apocryphal
Encyclopedia of Islam (1913 to 1938): apocryphal
Lina Eckenstein (1921): apocryphal
Alberto M. Candioti (1925): authentic
Muhammad Marmaduke Pickthall (1927): authentic
Ahmad Zaki Pasha (1867-1934): apocryphal
Muhammad Hamidullah (1935): apocryphal
Essad Bey (1936): authentic
Porphyrios III (1937): authentic
Jeanne Aubert (1938): authentic
Edmond Poupe (1938): authentic
Philipp K. Hitti (1940): apocryphal
Islamic Review (1940): authentic
Joan Meredyth Chichele Plowden (1940): not impossible
Joaquim Pedro Oliveira Martins (1946): authentic
‘Aziz Suryal Atiya (1955): authentic
Albert Champdor (1963): authentic
Alfred Nawrath (1963): authentic
Heinz Skrobucha (1966): apocryphal
Hasan al-Shirazi (1967): presumably authentic
Stuart E. Rosenberg (1970): cannot be proven or disproven

Oleg V. Volkoff (1972): neutral
Robin Waterfield (1973): authentic
Criton George Tornaritis (1980): authentic
A.F.L. Beeston (1983): apocryphal
Le Figaro (1986): authentic
Akram Zahoor and Z. Haq (1990): authentic
Nikolaos Tomadakis (1990): authentic
Konstantinos A. Manafis (1990): authentic
Hieromonk Demetrios Digbassanis (1990): authentic
Edwin Bernbaum (1990): authentic (according to tradition; dating back at least to early Fatimid times)
Nicole Levallois (1992): authentic
Giovanna Magi (1993): authentic
Joseph J. Hobbs (1995): neutral
Jacqueline Lafontaine-Dosogne (1996): authentic
LaMar C. Berrett and D. Kelly Ogden (1996): authentic
Jean-Michel Mouton (1998): apocryphal
Gawdat Gabra and Morsi Saad el-Din (1998): authentic
AnSar Hussain (1999): authentic
Hüseyn Hilmi Işik (2000): authentic
Yusuf Islam [Cat Stevens] (2001): authentic
Giovanni Magnani (2001): authentic
Harun Yahya (2002): authentic
Frederick Quinn (2002): authentic
Let's Go Inc. (2003): authentic
Bruce Merry (2004): authentic
J. Gordon Melton (2004): authentic
Brian Paciotti (2004): authentic
Reza Shah-Kaẓemi (2005): authentic
R.W. McColl (2005): authentic
Elizabeth A. Zachariadou (2005)
L'École pratique des hautes etudes (2006): apocryphal
Christine Walsh (2007): apocryphal
Martin Gray and Graham Hancock (2007): authentic
Jean-Pierre Isbouts (2007): authentic (according to tradition)
K. Staikos (2007): authentic (according to tradition)
David Douglas (2007): authentic
Andrew Eames (2008): authentic

National Geographic (2008): authentic (according to tradition)
‘Abdurrahman Wahid (2009): authentic
David Dakake (2009): authentic
Muqtedar Khan (2009): authentic
Peer-Jada Qureshi (2009): authentic
Mohamed el Hebeishy (2010): authentic
J. Gordon Melton and Martin Baumann (2010): authentic
Caner, Brock, Van Bladel, and Price (2010): apocryphal
Zia Shah (2011): authentic
Raj Bhala (2011): authentic
Hedieh Mirahmadi (2011): authentic
Farhad Malekian (2011): authentic
Ahmed Shams (2011): authentic
Altaf Hussain (2011): authentic
Diarmaid MacCulloch (2011): apocryphal
Brandie Ratliff (2012): apocryphal
Zora O’Neill (2012): authentic
Judy Hall (2012): authentic
Areej Zufari (2012): authentic
Kyriacos C. Markides (2012): authentic
James Emery White (2012): authentic
Helen C. Evans (2012): authentic
Father Justin of Sinai (2012): authentic
Pave the Way Foundation (2012): authentic
Shemeem Burney Abbas (2013): authentic
Nikos Kazantzakis (2013): authentic
Timothy Wright (2013): authentic
John Andrew Morrow (1990, 2012, 2013, 2015): authentic
Scores of scholars and signatories to the Covenants Initiative too numerous to mention (since 2013): authentic
Pierre-Vincent Claverie (2013): apocryphal
‘Aziz al-Azmeh (2014): apocryphal
Andrew D. Magnusson (2014): apocryphal
Walter D. Ward (2014): apocryphal
John Watson (2014): authentic (according to tradition)
Brad Tyndall (2014): authentic
Qasim Rashid (2014): authentic
Muhammad Quraish Shihab (2014): authentic

Zaid Shakir (2015): authentic
Hamza Yusuf (2015): authentic
Ronald H. Stone (2015): authentic
Calum Samuelson (2015): authentic
Alexander Winogradsky Frenkel (2015): authentic
Sayyid ʻAli Asghar (2015): authentic
ʻAzizah al-Hibri (2016): authentic
Ahmed El-Wakil (2016): authentic
Halim Rane (2019): authentic



(Courtesy of St. Catherine’s Monastery)

APPENDIX 2

THE REFERENCES FOR THE COVENANT OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD WITH THE CHRISTIANS OF NAJRAN

The *Covenant of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of Najran* has also been extensively authenticated over the past millennium and a half. The authorities who have transmitted it, the majority of whom have treated it as genuine, include the following:

The Prophet Muhammad (d. 632 CE): authentic
The Companions of the Prophet (seventh century CE): authentic
Abu Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthman, and ‘Ali (632-661 CE): authentic
Waqidi (745-822 CE): authentic
Ibn Ishaq (d. 761 or 770 CE) / Ibn Hisham (d. 833 CE): authentic
Muqatil ibn Sulayman al-Balkhi (d. 767): authentic
Abu Yusuf (d. 798 CE): authentic
Muhammad ibn al-Hasan al-Shaybani (d. 805 CE): authentic
Yahya ibn Adam (d. 818 CE): authentic
Abu ‘Ubayd (728-825 CE): authentic
Ibn Sa’d (d. 845): authentic
Ibn Zanjawayh (d. 865 CE): authentic
Abu Dawud (817-889 CE): authentic
Habib the Monk (878-879 CE): authentic
Baladhuri (d. 892 CE): authentic
Ya’qubi (897-898 CE): authentic
Chronicle of Seert (ninth century CE): authentic
Shaykh al-Mufid (eleventh century CE): authentic
Abu al-Futuh al-Razi (1078-1157 or 1161 CE): authentic
Fakhr al-Din al-Razi (1149-1209 CE): authentic
Bar Hebraeus (1226-1286 CE): authentic
Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (1292–1350 CE): authentic
Ibn Kathir (1301–1373): authentic
Maris (twelfth century CE): authentic

Qalqashandi (1355 or 1356-1418 CE): authentic
Amrus (fourteenth century CE): authentic
Giuseppe Simonio Assemani (1721): authentic
‘Abdullah al-Ma’mun al-Suhrawardy (1904 and 1905): authentic
Louis Cheikho (1909): apocryphal
Addai Scher (1919): apocryphal
Eugène Tisserant (1931): apocryphal
Laurence Edward Browne (1933): apocryphal
Louis Massignon (1942): apocryphal
Muhammad Hamidullah (1956: authentic in its Muslim version; interpolated in its Christian rendition)
Antoine Fattal (1958): apocryphal
Joseph Hajjar (1962): apocryphal
J.M. Fiey (1968): apocryphal
Armand Abel (1970 and 1984): apocryphal
Louis Massignon (1969): apocryphal
Claude Cahen (1909-1991): apocryphal
Muhammad Siddique Qureshi (1991): authentic
Abu Muhammad Ordoni (1992): authentic
Secondino Gatta (1993) : apocryphal
Raymond Le Coz (1995) : apocryphal
Claude Gilliot (1997): apocryphal
Vrej Nerses Nercessian (2001): apocryphal
Muhammad ‘Amarah (2002): authentic
Harun Yahya (2002): authentic
‘Adil Salahi (2002): authentic
Bat Ye’or (2002): apocryphal
David D. Grafton (2003): apocryphal
Philip Wood (2005): apocryphal
Jean-Michel Mouton and Andrei Popescu-Belis (2005): apocryphal
Laurent-Olivier Mallet (2008): apocryphal
Barbara Roggema (2009): apocryphal
David Wilmshurst (2011): apocryphal
James Howard-Johnston (2011): apocryphal
Milka Levy-Rubin (2011): authentic
Alejandro García-Sanjuán (2013): neutral
John Andrew Morrow (2013, 2015): authentic

Scores of scholars and signatories to the Covenants Initiative too numerous to mention (since 2013): authentic
Samuel Hugh Moffett (2014): possible
Yasin T. al-Jibouri (2014): authentic
Ahmed El-Wakil (2016): authentic
Halim Rane (2019): authentic

APPENDIX 3

THE REFERENCES FOR THE COVENANT OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD WITH THE CHRISTIANS OF THE WORLD

The chain of transmission of the *Covenant of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of the World* is equally impressive. References to this document are vast. Those who have treated it as trustworthy comprise the majority of the following:

The Prophet Muhammad (d. 632 CE): authentic
The Companions of the Prophet (seventh century CE): authentic
Abu Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthman, and ‘Ali (632-661 CE): authentic
Tabari (838-923 CE): authentic
Mas‘udi (896-956 CE): authentic
Caliph Muqtafi II of Baghdad (1138 CE): authentic
Ibn al-Athir (1160–1233 CE): authentic
Bar Hebraeus (1226-1286 CE): authentic
Maris (twelfth century CE): authentic
Amrus (fourteenth century CE): authentic
Father Pacifique Scaliger (found in 1629; dated 1538 CE): authentic
René de l’Escale Pacifique de Provins Scaliger (1627) authentic
Louis XIII, King of France (1601-1643) authentic
André Du Ryer (c. 1580-1660): authentic
Jacobo Nagy de Harsany (b. 1615): authentic
Gabriel Sionita (1630): authentic
Antoine Vitray (1630): authentic
M.J. Fabricius (1638): authentic
Hugo Grotius (1583-1645): aprocryphal
Claudius Salmasius (d. 1653): authentic
Johann Heinrich Hottinger (1660): neutral
Gisbertus Voëtius (1589-1676): apocryphal
Johannes Hoornbeek (1617-1666): apocryphal
Sieur Bespier (seventeenth century): apocryphal

Dean Humphrey Prideaux (1648-1724): aprocryphal
Pierre Bayle (1647-1706): apocryphal
Johann Georg Nissel (1655; 1661): authentic
L. Addison (1679): authentic
Henry Stubbe (1693): apocryphal
Giovani Paolo Marana (1642-1693): authentic
Pierre Bayle (1647-1706): apocryphal
Des grossen Propheten und Apostels Muhammad's Testament… (1664): authentic
Pierre Briot and Paul Ricaut (1668 CE): authentic
Abraham Hinckleman (1690): authentic
Henri Basnage de Beauval (1657-1710): authentic
Eusèbe Renaudot (1646-1720): authentic
A.C. Zeller R. Abrah. b. Dior (1724): authentic
Johann Lorenz von Mosheim (1693-1755): apocryphal
Claude-Pierre Goujet (1758): authentic
Edward Gibbon (1776): authentic
Comité d'instruction publique de la Convention Nationale (1795) authentic
Jean-Baptiste Lefebvre de Villebrune (1795) authentic
Societe d'Amis de la Religion et de la Patrie (1797): authentic
Asiatic Annual Register (1801): authentic
Thomas Christian Tyschen (1804): apocryphal
Jean B. Ladvocat (1821): apocryphal
Edmund Henry Barker (1823): apocryphal
Ministers from various Evangelical Denominations (1839): authentic
C.B. Houry (1840): authentic
Henry Layard (1850): authentic
Johann Karl Ludwig Gieseler (1857): apocryphal
Jakobs Georgios Pitzipios-Bey (1858): authentic
Ignaz von Döllinger (1799-1890): apocryphal
Sir Travers Twiss (1809-1897): authentic
Pedro de Madrazo (1816-1898) authentic
Edward Rehatsek (1819-1891): authentic
M. Grassi (Alfio) (1826) authentic
Alexandre de Miltitz (1838) authentic
Alphonse de Lamartine (1862): authentic to Ottoman

Sultans
Jean Gay (1875): apocryphal
Edward Van Dyke (1881) authentic
Baron de Slane (1883-1885): apocryphal
Henry Layard (1850): authentic
‘Abdullah al-Suhrawardy (1904 and 1905): authentic
M.J. Guillaume (1907): apocryphal
James Thayer Addison (1887-1953): authentic
Sésostris Sidarouss (1907): authentic
Louis Cheikho (1909): apocryphal
Meletius IV (1922): authentic
Alberto M. Candioti (1925): apocryphal
Sir Harry Charles Luke (1925): apocryphal to modern
Western scholars but authentic to early Muslim scholars
Maurice Barrès (1927): apocryphal
Ibrahim Auwad (1933): authentic
Jeanne Aubert (1938): authentic
Edmond Poupe (1938): authentic
Nikēphoros Moschopoulos (1956): authentic
Joseph Hajjar (1962): authentic
Abdullah Alladin (1971): authentic
Idmun Rabbat (1980): apocryphal
Josée Balagna (1984): authentic
Antoine Fattal (1995): apocryphal
Edwin E. Jacques (1995): apocryphal
Mithoo Coorlawala (2011): authentic
John Andrew Morrow (2013, 2015): authentic
Scores of scholars and signatories to the Covenants
Initiative too numerous to mention (since 2013): authentic
Gábor Kármán (2015): apocryphal
Ahmed El-Wakil (2016): authentic
Halim Rane (2019): authentic

(Courtesy of Simonopetra Monastery)

APPENDIX 4

THE REFERENCES FOR THE COVENANT OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD WITH THE ASSYRIAN CHRISTIANS

The *Covenant of the Prophet Muhammad with the Assyrian Christians* also has a solid chain of historical transmission. It includes:

The Prophet Muhammad (d. 632 CE): authentic
The Companions of the Prophet (seventh century CE): authentic
Abu Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthman, and ‘Ali (632-661 CE): authentic
Maris (twelfth century CE): authentic
Bar Hebraeus (1226-1268 CE): authentic
Amrus (14th century CE): authentic
Asahel Grant (1841): authentic
Horatio Southgate (1856): authentic
Adolphe d’Avril (1864): authentic
Thomas William Marshall (1865): authentic
Bedr Khan Beg (d. 1868), his son, and his grandson: authentic
Vital Cuinet (1891): authentic
Saturnino Ximénèz (1895): authentic
Earl Percy (1901): authentic
Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts (1904): authentic
William Ainser Wigram (1910, 1920 and 1929): authentic
Abraham Yohannan (1916): authentic
Surma D’Bait Dar Shimun (1920): authentic
J.G. Browne (1937): authentic
Jeanne Aubert (1938): authentic
George David Malech (1910): authentic
William Chauncey Emhardt and George M. Lamsa (1970): authentic
Carleton Stevens Coon (1972): authentic
John Joseph (1983): authentic

Gabriele Yonan (1996): authentic according to Assyrian accounts
A.M. Hamilton (2004): authentic
R.S. Stafford (2006): authentic
Theodore D'Mar Shimun (2008): authentic
Albert Edward Ismail Yelda (2001, 2002, 2004): authentic
Areej Zufari (2012): authentic
John Andrew Morrow (2013, 2015): authentic
Scores of scholars and signatories to the Covenants Initiative too numerous to mention (since 2013): authentic
Ahmed El-Wakil (2016): authentic
Halim Rane (2019): authentic

APPENDIX 5

THE REFERENCES FOR THE COVENANT OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD WITH THE CHRISTIANS OF PERSIA

The *Covenant of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of Persia* has a sound chain of transmission. While not nearly as well-known as the other prophetic covenants, the Persian Covenant is essential the same in content as the others. Consequently, the authentication of the other covenants serves to establish its genuine nature. Although fewer in number, the dozens of authorities that have authenticated it include powerful, influential, and respected religious and political figures:

The Prophet Muhammad (d. 632 CE): authentic
The Companions of the Prophet (seventh century CE): authentic
Abu Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthman, and ‘Ali (632-661 CE): authentic
Sebēos (660 CE): authentic
Ja‘far al-Sadiq (eighth century CE): authentic
Maris (twelfth century): authentic
Bar Hebraeus (1226-1286 CE): authentic
Amrus (fourteenth century CE): authentic
Shah ‘Abbas and Safavid Shi’ite scholars (1606): authentic
Leon Arpee (1948): authentic
Seta B. Dadoyan (2011 CE): apocryphal but inspired on authentic material
John Andrew Morrow (2013, 2017): authentic
Scores of scholars and signatories to the Covenants Initiative too numerous to mention (since 2013 CE): authentic
Ahmed El-Wakil (2016 CE): authentic
Halim Rane (2019): authentic

APPENDIX 6

THE REFERENCES FOR THE COVENANT OF MAQNA

The *Covenant of the Prophet Muhammad with the Jews of Maqna* has an impressive chain of transmitters. It features:

The Prophet Muhammad (d. 632 CE): authentic
The Companions of the Prophet (seventh century CE): authentic
Abu Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthman, and ‘Ali (632-661 CE): authentic
Waqidi (d. 822 CE): authentic
Ibn Sa‘d (d. 845): authentic
Ibn Zanjawayh (d. 865 CE): authentic
Baladhuri (d. c. 892 CE): authentic
Ibn Hibban (d. 965 CE): authentic
Ibn ‘Asakir (d. 1175 CE): authentic
Aḥmad ibn Yūsuf ibn ʿAlī Ibn al-Azraq al-Fāriqī (1117-1176 CE): authentic
Libri Splendorum: authentic
Abufeda (13th-14th centuries): authentic
George Elmacin, also known as Ibn al-’Amid (1205–1273 CE): authentic
Maris (twelfth century CE): authentic
Bar Hebraeaus (1226-1286 CE): authentic
Ibn Kathir (1301–1373 CE): authentic
Amrus (fourteenth century CE): authentic
Ibn Hajar (1372-1449 CE): authentic
Ibn Qayyim al-Jawziyyah (fourteenth century CE):

apocryphal
Feridun Bey (d. 1583 CE): authentic
Ahmed ben Joseph (1599 CE): authentic
François-Florentin Brunet (1792): authentic
Edward Gibbon (d. 1794): authentic
Sésostris Sidarouss (1907): authentic
Hershfield (qtd. Qureishi): authentic
Yashnki (qtd. Qureishi): authentic
Rashprier (qtd. Qureishi): authentic
Muhammad Hamidullah (1956): apocryphal
Joseph Hajjar (1962): authentic
Muhammad Siddique Qureishi (1991): apocryphal
Harun Yahya (2002): authentic
John Andrew Morrow (2013, 2017): authentic
Scores of scholars and signatories to the Covenants Initiative too numerous to mention (since 2013): authentic
Ahmed El-Wakil (2016): authentic (in its original Jewish version)
Halim Rane (2019): authentic

APPENDIX 7

THE REFERENCES FOR THE COVENANT OF THE PROPHET MUHAMMAD WITH THE ARMENIAN CHRISTIANS

The *Covenant of the Prophet Muhammad with the Armenian Christians* has been passed down by a persuasive list of authorities who deemed it to be the genuine article. These figures include:

The Prophet Muhammad (d. 632 CE): authentic
The Companions of the Prophet (seventh century CE): authentic
Abu Bakr, ‘Umar, ‘Uthman, and ‘Ali (632-661 CE): authentic
‘Umar issues decree protecting Christians of Jerusalem (638 CE): authentic
Covenant of Mu‘awiyyah (652 CE): authentic
Sebēos (660 CE): Prophet’s Oath
Covenant of ‘Ali (660 CE): authentic
Habib ibn Maslamah al-Fihri (7th century CE): authentic
Sahak III (703 CE): authentic
‘Umar ‘Abd al-’Aziz (719 CE): authentic
Baladhuri (d. c. 892 CE): authentic
Yovhannēs Drasxanakertc’i (10th century): authentic
Ibn Hawqal (d. 978): authentic
Samvēl Anec’i (1182 CE): authentic
Firman of Salah al-Din (1187 CE): authentic
Maris (twelfth century CE): authentic
Kirakos Ganjakec’i (thirteenth century CE): authentic
Grigor Tat’ewac’i (fourteenth to fifteenth centuries CE): authentic
Claude Duret (1613): authentic
Pierre Duval (1676): authentic
Esprit Fléchier (1782): authentic
Johannes Avdall (1870): authentic
M. Belin (1914): apocryphal
Father Jerôme Golubovich’s (1921): apocryphal
al-Husayn ibn ‘Ali (1854-1931): authentic

Dikran H.B. Sayalanians (1931): authentic
John H. Melkon Rose (1993): authentic
Gregory Krikorian (2002): authentic
John V. Tolan (2009): apocryphal
Seta Dadoyan (2011-2014): apocryphal
John Andrew Morrow (2013, 2015): authentic
Scores of scholars and signatories to the Covenants
Initiative too numerous to mention (since 2013): authentic
Ahmed El-Wakil (2016): authentic
Halim Rane (2019): authentic

ABOUT THE COVENANTS OF THE PROPHET FOUNDATION

The vision of The Covenants of the Prophet Foundation is to promote peace and justice according to the model of religious pluralism and interfaith friendship established by the Prophet Muhammad, peace and blessings be upon him and his progeny, in his Covenants, his Treaties, his Letters, his Sunnah, and the Holy Qur'an.

The mission of The Covenants of the Prophet Foundation is to disseminate, support the study of, increase public knowledge of, and demonstrate the contemporary social and legal relevance of, the covenants, letters and treaties of the Prophet Muhammad with various other faith communities of his time, especially the Peoples of the Book -- Christians, Jews, Samaritans, and Zoroastrians -- thereby promoting a tolerant, traditional, civilizational, classical, and universal Islam; supporting Islamic unity; improving inter- and intra-faith relations; defending human rights and dignity through scholarship, engagement, and interfaith activism; and facilitating cooperation between the faiths in order to maintain their integrity in the face of the increasing secularization, marginalization and politicization of religious communities and institutions.

The Covenants of the Prophet Foundation will work to infuse these efforts with a wider understanding of the sacred traditions of the human race, understood not primarily according to authoritarian dogmatism -- though dogma certainly has its place -- but above all according to compassion, wisdom and inspiration, thereby placing them in line with the outlook of the Holy Qur'an, as demonstrated by such rulings as "There is no compulsion in religion" (2:256) and "Verily! Those who believe and those who are Jews and Christians, and Sabians, whoever believes in God and the Last Day and does righteous good deeds shall have their reward with their Lord, on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve" (2:62).

Please show your generous support for the Covenants of the Prophet Foundation: https://www.paypal.com/us/fundraiser/charity/3689215 / www.covenantsoftheprophet.org

(Painting of St. John Climacus, the abbot from St. Catherine's Monastery. He recognized that Muhammad would become a prophet and requested his future protection for the monks of Mount Sinai)

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

John Andrew Morrow (Ilyas Islam) is a Métis French-Canadian who was born in Montreal, Quebec. Besides his predominantly First Nations, French, and Irish ancestry, he descends in part from Moriscos from Muslim Spain and North Africa. After years of soul-searching and study, he embraced Islam at the age of sixteen. He received his PhD from the University of Toronto where he studied Hispanic, Native, and Islamic Studies. He has also completed over thirty years of traditional Islamic seminary studies both independently and at the hands of a series of Sunni, Shiite, and Sufi scholars.

Dr. Morrow worked as a university professor for two decades. He has taught for the University of Toronto, Park University, Northern State University, Eastern New Mexico University, Ivy Tech, and the University of Virginia. He has been a research fellow at the University of Chicago, Purdue University, and Harvard University. Professor Morrow received a Student Impact Award from Northern State University and was recognized as a Distinguished Faculty Member and a Master Teacher by Ivy Tech Community College of Indiana in 2012 and 2013. He received an Interfaith Service Award from the Islamic Society of North America in 2016 and a Certificate of Special Congressional Recognition in 2017.

After reaching the rank of Full Professor, he retired from academia to devote himself entirely to scholarship and service. Professor Morrow has authored a vast body of scholarly works. He has published hundreds of scholarly articles and dozens of academic books, including *The Covenants of the Prophet Muhammad with the Christians of the World* (2013), which has been translated into Spanish, Italian, Arabic, and Indonesian. He is the Editor-in-Chief of *Islam and the People of the Book: Critical Studies on the Covenants of the Prophet*, a three-volume encyclopedic work on the letters and treaties of the Prophet Muhammad.

Committed to social justice, Dr. Morrow directs a mental-health and foster care agency which serves thousands of families. Along with Charles Upton, John Andrew Morrow directs the Covenants of the Prophet Foundation, lectures around the world, works an analyst, and

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